THE WORK OF A GREAT PARISH

C. F. GARBETT

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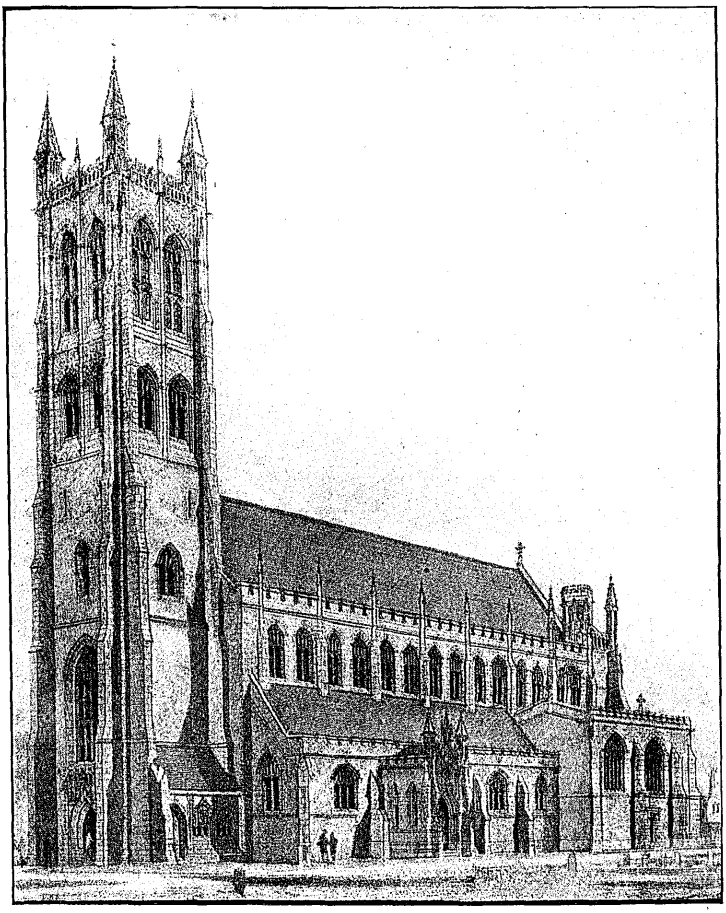
THE WORK OF A GREAT PARISH



PORTSEA PARISH CHURCH

From a Drawing by Mr. A. C. Blomfield

THE WORK OF A GREAT PARISH

BY

NINE PORTSEA MEN

EDITED BY

THE REV. C. F. GARBETT

VICAR OF PORTSEA

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
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TO EDGAR

BISHOP OF ST. ALBANS

VICAR OF PORTSEA 1878—1895

INTRODUCTION

By the Archbishop of York

The Vicar of Portsea has asked me as a former vicar of the parish to write a word of introduction to this book. It gives, as it were, a bird's-eye view of the Church of England at work in a great town parish. It is the record of ideals and efforts which have stood the test of thirty-six years. To me, personally, it is, of course, a book full of the deepest interest. In the course of manifold experiences of great parishes in East London and the North of England, I have never seen anything quite like Portsea. The profit of comradeship of seventeen clergy living, praying, working together: the fidelity of the great band of workers and the loyalty of the people: the throng of confirmation candidates and of communicants: the sea of two thousand upturned faces seen from the pulpit on Sunday evenings in the noble Parish Church—these are memories which can never fade. I cannot expect that the book will be of the same intense interest to others, as it must needs be to me and to all

who have shared with me the strenuous and happy labours of the parish. But it cannot, I think, fail to interest all, whether clergy or laity, who are anywhere engaged in the great task of making the Church—its teaching, its sacraments, its corporate life—a living power in the midst of the people. Every parish is different from all others in its conditions and problems. In every parish therefore the Church ought to have its own special methods of dealing with them. Portsea is a great Mother parish of some 40,000 people. The policy of its vicars has accordingly been to refrain from one-sided developments, whether of doctrine or of ritual, and to present the truth and the claims of the Catholic Church clearly and firmly, yet in the way most likely to impress the great body of the people. The teaching has been positive rather than controversial, and never partisan. The ritual of worship has been orderly and dignified rather than elaborate, and never fussy. In Church government the place of the laity has always been heartily acknowledged. The Church has always been set forth not as a mere Sunday congregation, but as a society for common service. The aim has been to create a type of churchmanship strong, sane, steadfast, free from both narrowness and indefiniteness, showing its loyalty in witness, and passing from worship to work.

No ideal is ever fully realised: and no one who has ever served the Church at Portsea can shut his eyes or his memory to many failures. I used to say that our besetting sin was—numbers. If men think

too much of hundreds, they are apt to think too little of individual souls. But the recent mission (described in the last chapter of this book) was a striking manifestation of the reality and devotion of the Church life of this parish. The body of five hundred workers, the procession through the streets of nine hundred lay people giving public witness that they were on Christ's side, the presence of over one thousand communicants at five o'clock on a work-day morning at the close of the mission—a scene, I imagine, unprecedented in the parochial history of the Church of England—were visible signs that the work of thirty-six years has not been wholly in vain.

The spirit and the methods of this work are clearly and simply described in the chapters of this book. Even a former vicar may claim that all who are concerned with the problems of the Church at work among the people may learn many useful lessons from them. In regard to such points—for example, as the relation of a central parish church to its mission churches (Chapter II); the missionary work of the Church among the poor (Chapter IX); the organisation of Sunday-schools, clubs, and parochial relief (Chapters IV, V, and XII); the best ways of reaching and influencing men, and the true function of the Church of England Men's Society in a parish (Chapter VI); the use of Parish Councils (Chapter XI); the preparation for a parochial mission (Chapter XV)—there is here a record of actual experience worth many theories and lectures on 'Pastoral Theology.'

To many people, doubtless, any record of parish work may seem dull and unromantic. All depends upon the point of view. Seen from the point of view of the Ideal—that is, of things as they really are—what is the work of the Church in any parish? It is the continuation of the noblest and most inspiring of all romances—the riding forth of the Perfect Knight, the Christ of God, to redeem the world. It is the bringing into human lives of the greatest things—the Son of God, the Cross and Companionship of Christ, the strength and cheer of the Divine Spirit. It is the gathering of men and women, lads and girls and children into the Kingdom of God, into 'the Holy City Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.' So regarded, the story of 'The Work of a Great Parish' is a true romance. Those who are engaged in that work, clergy or laity, are in truth engaged in a noble adventure; and for myself, when I think of what it really means, I cannot but 'wish myself among them' once again.

COSMO EBOR.

PREFACE

THIS book gives an account of the history and work of a parish which is now in the 748th year of its foundation, and will celebrate this year the twenty-fifth anniversary of the consecration of its new parish church. It describes the methods and organisations which are the outcome of the collective experience of the clergy and laity who have worked in the parish since it was started on its modern lines by Dr. Jacob thirty-six years ago.[1] Its chapters are written by men who know Portsea from within, and who have shared in its life and work.

The subject of the book is one parish; it has therefore obvious limitations. There is no place in it for any account of the splendid work done by the neighbouring parishes which have been gradually formed from the Mother Church. The methods, too, which it describes as valuable at Portsea are obviously not of universal application, and might be found quite impracticable in many other parishes where the conditions are

[1] During this period there have been ninety clergy at work in the parish. Of these seven are dead; eleven are now serving abroad.

different, and the staff of clergy is on a smaller scale. Nor is the book exhaustive even with reference to Portsea; many of its organisations have had to be passed over with the most casual reference, and no attempt has been made to give any account of the relationship of the parish to the town and the diocese.

The writers make no claim that the work and methods they describe are perfect and final. They are conscious of some weak joints in the parochial armour, which they believe will be strengthened in years to come; and in a living parish there must be frequent change and readaptation of machinery as new needs make themselves felt. But they send forth the book in the hope that it may be of interest to many who know the parish only by name, and may give suggestions and guidance to those who desire to understand something of the methods and organisations found practical and useful in a great town parish.

I must thank Mr. A. C. Blomfield, of 6 Montagu Place, London, for his kindness in allowing the use of his drawing of the exterior of the Parish Church, and Mr. W. H. Barrell, High Street, Portsmouth, for the use of his negatives of the two engravings of the Old Church.

C. F. GARBETT.

1914

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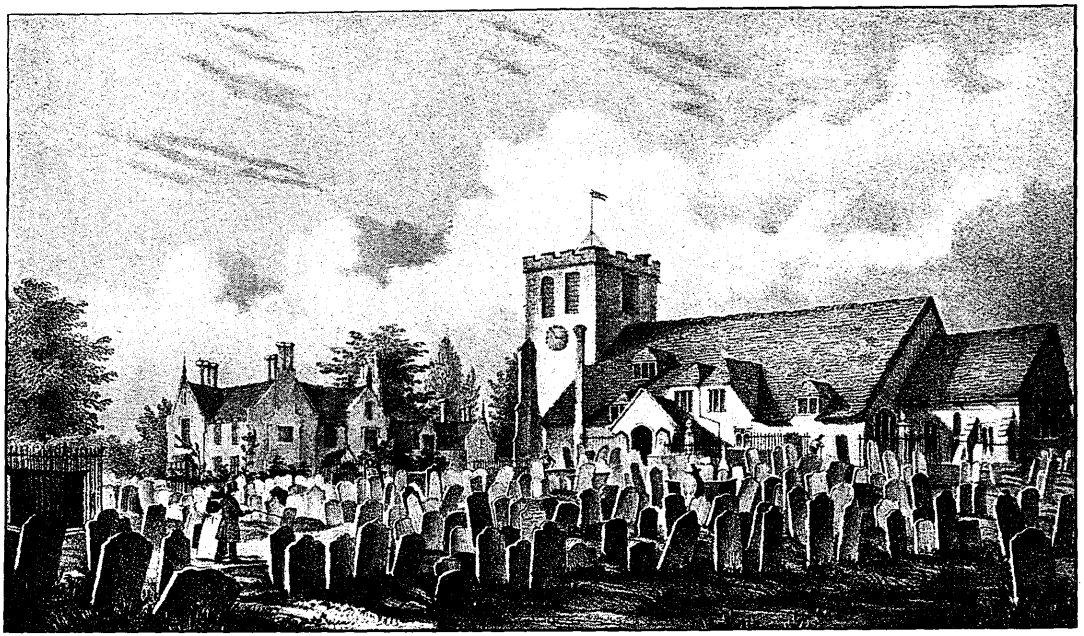
I

THE ANCIENT PARISH

By the Rev. P. T. B. CLAYTON, F.S.A.



THE OLD PARISH CHURCH

From an Engraving, 1837

I

THE ANCIENT PARISH

By the Rev. P. T. B. Clayton, F.S.A.

Portsea parish is so modern in appearance, that few even of its most devoted servants have any clear understanding of its honourable antiquity. Pictures, in the vestry and elsewhere, of other churches than the present convey a dim conception that this was once the site of a village church; while the huge churchyard, with its multitude of gravestones in various stages of dilapidation and illegibility, witnesses to the existence of parishioners more or less remote. Nor yet have local historians done much to dispel the darkness that surrounds its past. Mr. W. Gates in his 'History of Portsmouth' devotes some pages to the subject, and appends a preliminary list of post-Reformation vicars. The 'Victoria County History of Hampshire' adds a few items of illumination. But there has plainly been a general feeling that work of the kind would be thrown away, where the glory of the latter house so greatly exceeds the glory of the former. Moreover, the very completeness of the break with the past, the almost utter absence of relics of the old church, and the ignorance even of those MS. resources which

are still extant seem to have rendered the field of research a barren and untempting one. During the last three years, however, a good deal has come to light from which some history of the parish may be reconstructed; so much indeed, that it is impossible to do more in an article of this character than to lay the new material under a very light contribution.

The surviving relics of the old parish are so few that they may be here enumerated. A great many more must still be under ground—built into the foundations of the present church, and underneath the churchyard grass and gravel. Indeed the mound upon which the church stands is itself probably composed of such remains. It is impossible to build three churches on the single site without this being the natural result. But of relics actually accessible, there remain in the tower four bells dating from 1764, in the sanctuary the fragments of a Purbeck coffin of the thirteenth century, in the vestry a gilded carving of the Royal Arms of the eighteenth century, and in the safe a black-letter Bible of 1578, and the registers and churchwarden's accounts from 1632 with certain imperfections afterwards to be described. In the garden of Mr. Coish's house, 153 Fratton Road (itself of the early eighteenth century, the oldest house in Fratton Road, and inhabited to-day by the direct descendants of its builders), is the fragment of a capital and pilaster from the old church of thirteenth century character. In private and untraced possession is the wooden figure of an angel with a trumpet, that once, as still at St. Thomas's Church, adorned the sounding board of the seventeenth century pulpit. This came, during the demolition of the old

church, into the possession of the late Mr. J. Goldsmith of Milton, with whose effects it was sold by auction after his death.

The documentary materials for the medieval Church are, owing to another misfortune, similarly slight. The Southwick Cartulary, a fourteenth[1] century collection of documents relating to the various local interests of Southwick Priory and for many years in the possession of the Thistlethwayte family at Southwick, has disappeared, if it has not actually perished. And its loss is the more distressing, in that its known contents include (besides much that would be invaluable in regard to other places) a great number of documents relating to Portsea. All now available is a series of excerpts from it made by Sir Francis Madden more than fifty years ago, and now deposited[2] with his other collections in the MSS. department of the British Museum, over which he once presided. Unfortunately these extracts do not comprise what a history of Portsea most needs, which is the more curious, in that his collection related specially to Portsmouth and its neighbourhood. On the other hand, the volume[3] of his collection which refers exclusively to Portsmouth contains no notes from the Southwick Cartulary, while in the other register of Southwick[4] there are no Portsea entries.

A side-wind has, however, brought something that the direct source failed to yield—a transcript from the Southwick Cartulary of the Founder's deed of gift and its subsequent confirmations. It appears that

[1] The contents of the Cartulary covered 200 years—from the Charter of Portchester (1133) to one of 20 Edw. III (1326).
[2] *Add. MS.* 33280. [3] *Add. MS.* 33283.
[4] *Harleian MS.* 317.

Daniel Howard, Mayor of Portsmouth in 1818 (also in 1822, 1826, 1830, 1837, and 1841), took a deep interest in the early history of the place, and went so far as to write a series of MS. volumes, and to collect a large number of valuable memoranda. Through the courtesy of Mrs. Howard of Guildford, it has been possible to examine these materials carefully; and, among much else that is of service, there occurs a copy, *in extenso* from the Southwick ledger, of the Founder's deed of gift, without which the history of the parish would have no definite opening. An acknowledgment of indebtedness in the matter of the Madden MSS. is due to Miss L. Redstone, who was responsible for the summary of the parish in the 'Victoria County History.' While for a detailed examination of the registers, a task requiring far more skill and time than the present writer could possibly have brought to it, he is most deeply sensible of the patient care of the Rev. A. E. Kinch.

While the Charter of Baldwin de Portsea may be considered rightly as the opening of the parish history, it does not exclude the possibility of the parish being in ecclesiastical existence from very much earlier times. In 'Domesday,' the date of which for Winchester is about 1086, no mention is made of Portsea at all, the three districts[1] that formed part of it being mentioned separately. These are sparsely inhabited, fifteen villeins, eight bordars, and eight serfs being the aggregate census of the farm-hands. The soil never favoured cereals, one windmill and one water-mill being all that the island has ever managed to

[1] Copenore, Bochelande, and Frodintone (assuming that Applestede was on the Gosport shore).

maintain. It is not until in the twelfth century, when Portchester begins to grow difficult of access to shipping, that Portsea, and subsequently Portsmouth, come into real existence.

It is indeed intrinsically probable that some religious provision was made for the island previously; nor does the silence of 'Domesday' prove the absence of a church here or elsewhere; but we can scarcely conjecture another such pre-Norman gem as Boarhunt Church on our site.

In 1133 Henry I founded the Church of our Lady, Portchester, for the Austin Canons, who moved thence to Southwick about 1150. Here they began to grow rapidly in influence upon the locality, and it is to them that Baldwin, our founder, looked for a regardful patronage of the parish church of Portsea. In about 1166 Portsea had a parish priest of its own, named Ralph [1] (Radulph), and before 1171 [2] the parish church is formally handed over to the Southwick Canons as an already active sphere of influence.

It seems desirable to print Baldwin's charter here in full, partly on account of its intrinsic interest, partly because it has never yet been printed. Here, then, is Daniel Howard's transcript, taken, we must assume, direct from the Southwick Ledger. Where

[1] 'Ralph vicar' de Portesia' occurs as signatory to a charter of about 1166 by which Baldwin de Portsea gives a virgate of land at Frodintone to Monk Sherborne Priory. This charter is preserved at Queen's College, Oxford; the 'Ralph pbr' de Porces',' who witnesses Baldwin's charter to Southwick, is probably connected with Portchester, not Portsea. (I am indebted for the substance of this note, as for much else, to Mr. A. T. Everitt.)

[2] 'Rod' Archidiaconus Winton' must come in the lacuna between Hugh de Pudsey, who became Bishop of Durham in December 1153, and Ralph, who became Archdeacon in 1171, to be followed by Robert in 1174 and Roger in 1181.

the contractions are beyond obvious expansion, they are left as they stand.

KARTA BALDWIN DE PORCESIA DE ECCLESIA DE PORCESIA ET DE DIMIDIA HYDA IN STUBINTONA ET DE DIMIDIA VIRGATA IN BOCKLAND IN PASTURA.

Reverendissimo patri et domino Henrico Dei gratia Winton Episcopo et omnibus fidelibus Domini tam praesentibus quam futuris Baldwinus de Porcesia salutem. Sciatis quod ego pro salute et incolumitate Domini Henrici Regis et Hugo de Porcesia et Henrici de Porcesia et John de Porcesia Dominorum meorum saluti et pro anima mea et uxori mea et omnium ancessorum meorum et heredum meorum et amicorum meorum saluti, dedi et concessi in liberam et puram et perpetuam elemosynam Ecclesiae S. Maria de Sudwica et Canonici eidem Loci Ecclesiam de Porcesia, sicut laicus hoc potest et solet Ecclesiam donare, cum terris et Decimis et omnibus rebus ad eam pertinentibus et dimidiam Hydam Terrae apud Stubintona cum praefata Ecclesia et Dimidia Virgata Terrae apud Bocland et pastura centum Ovium et xv Animalium et xx porcorum in Dominico meo et in communione poiûm [?] meorum has an Elemosinas meas tam de Ecclesia quam de praedictis terris et pasturis praescriptis Canonicis dedi liberas et qetas [quitas] ab omni Exactione et servatio scutari et eas erga o' Horis ego et Hedi' mei pro posse nro' adqetare et warrantizare debeam. Hujus donationis et affirmationis testes sunt Rod' Archidiaconus Winton, Robert de Clafford, Ricard de Wimering, Robertus Clericus, Henricus de Mednill Est porc' [?]

Rem' de Burhunt, Ricardus frater ejus, Ricardus filius Daniel, Roger Clericus, William Aurifaber, William filius Ansgood, William de Ethinge, domini Richeri filius ejus Radulphus presbyter de Porcesia Ric' Ang'.

Transcripta Kartarie Suwicensis Ecclesiae, Cap. VI.

There followed this charter in the Southwick Ledger, three confirmations of the same by John de Port, Henry de Blois, and King Henry II. Each has its peculiar interest, yet they are too long to find room here. In the last two Portsea is designated by its dedication to Saint Mary. The 'Testes' are much the same as in the charter, although the Archdeacon changes to Radulph, and the Bishop's witnesses include William filio Regis Stephi' !

Two or three comments on the document must be made here. First, as to its date. The *floruerunt* of all the signatories is still a matter of uncertainty, but the Bishopric of Henry de Blois terminated on August 8, 1171, so that a lower date for the charter is fixed. As for an upper date, no mention of Portsea or Portsmouth occurs in the Confirmatory charter[1] of Pope Eugenius (1145–1154). Baldwin's[2] charter therefore stands somewhere in these seventeen years, and if the date of Ralph's witnessing signature in the Monk Sherborne charter is taken as the date of the foundation, we are now in the 748th year of the parish, as well as the twenty-fifth of the new church. Secondly, it must be noted that there is no mention in the charter of the building of the church as an effort

[1] Copied in full by Madden, fol. 55.

[2] Which is in the reign of Henry—i.e. later than December 19, 1154.

remaining to be made. It suggests rather that it is already standing. On the other hand, it is rather difficult to imagine that the style of Portchester could in the space of only some thirty years become the style presented by the picture of the interior of the old parish church, which shows, among other things, octagonal piers. Now, in the picture of the old exterior may be seen two early lancet windows in the sanctuary which might much more easily, by comparison with those in the transepts of St. Thomas, be considered of the twelfth century. Perhaps we should surmise the rebuilding of the nave in the thirteenth century, when Portsea began to grow into a place of some importance.

These investigations at least prove one point beyond dispute: the priority of St. Mary's, Portsea, to St. Thomas's, Portsmouth.[1] Indeed the Chapel of St. Andrew, Fratton, apparently is of an intervening date. A confirmatory Bull of Pope Urban[2] (1185–1187) speaks of 'ecclesia de Porteseia cum capella,' and a similar mandate of Pope Alexander[3] mentions the churches of Portsea; a further confirmation from the same Pope specifies 'ecclesia de Porteseia cum omnibus pertinenciis suis de Portes-mue,' and goes on to 'Capella de S. Andrewe de Portesia.' St. Thomas is first mentioned by name in a Confirmation of Bishop Richard's (1173–1189) charter to 'Guidon' Priori et Convent' ecclesiae sancte Marie de Suthewyk.' Here it is spoken of as a chapel in process of erection in the parish of Portsea ('capellam beati Thome Mart'

[1] In Southwick Ledger (p. 72) occurred a document, partially copied by D. Howard (*MSS.* p. 105), in which the Prior of Southwick, writing to Portsmouth concerning the dedication of its altars, speaks of 'matricem ecclesiam de Porcesia.'

[2] *Add. MS.* 33280, fol. 51. [3] *Ibid.* fol. 516.

quam in parochia vestra de Portesia nostro assensu et concilio edificare cepistes').[1]

We must leave this matter here, only allowing ourselves the deep regret that the Chapel of St. Andrew, which up to the sixteenth century[2] remained the first Mission attached to the Mother Church, should have perished so completely that its very site is a matter for conjecture, and, moreover, that its name should not have been revived when St. Mary's Mission came to be dedicated.

For the parish church to be supplemented thus early in its career by two new buildings shows how rapidly the population of Portsea and Portsmouth must have grown. The reverse of the corporation seal, with its triple invocation of the Virgin, St. Thomas, and St. Nicholas (the patron saint of seamen), may echo the Church dedications of the place. And, indeed, through all the vicissitudes of the town, St. Mary's and St. Thomas's have not been deaf to the needs of their parishioners. Unfortunately, as matters stand at present, there is little information forthcoming for a sketch of the work of the medieval parish. The names of twenty vicars of Portsea appointed by Southwick have come to light, but there is no information as to what manner of men they were.[3]

Meanwhile, the royal favour had not only

[1] Fol. 74, the terms of confirmation are also given in fol. 52.

[2] For mention of St. Andrew's Furlong (8½ acres in extent) vide *Borough Records*, pp. 669 and 683; for grant of the Chapel to Edward Wymarke in 1588, vide *Pat. Roll.* 30 *Eliz.* pt. 7.

[3] Richard I's charter to Portsmouth (May 1194) is witnessed by 'William de St. Marie Ecclesiae.' (*Borough Records*, p. 573.) So the second Vicar of Portsea stood godfather to Portsmouth.

Stephen, Vicar of Portsea, appealed for remission from the triennial tenth on account of burning of the vicarage, etc. by the French. *Cal. Close*, 1339, p. 632.

heightened the standing of Portsmouth, but was reflected in the early topography of Portsea. It has often been fondly imagined that 'Kingston' is a comparatively modern appellation. Nothing could be further from the facts. When Richard I built the town of Portsmouth and let it out to farm to the burgesses, the farm paid was for 'Portsmouth and Kingston.'[1] Presumably the name equals 'King's tun' or 'King's town.' It is thus of twelfth century origin at least. There are several entries concerning Kingston in the Southwick Cartulary which would probably throw light upon the question. It may also be noted that Richard I had a curia of his own at Portsmouth; this fact may have some bearing on those perplexing entries in the seventeenth century parish accounts which, in speaking of 'composition oats' and 'the King's poultry,' imply that the royal table had an ancient prerogative for occasional supply from the parish.

In May 1912, by following up a clue supplied by a paragraph in Mr. Gates' 'History of Portsmouth,' we had the good fortune to discover the broken portions of a thirteenth century Purbeck coffin at the entrance to the vicarage. It had been carried there during the demolition of the old church in 1843, and had been broken up to make stone for a rockery. It has since been pieced together, and restored only so far as was absolutely necessary; and is now replaced in the position relatively identical to that which it occupied for nearly six hundred years—due north of the altar.

[1] Vide *Pipe Rolls and the Chancellor's Roll for* 3 *John*. There was also a road in Portsea called 'Regia via.' *Pat. Roll.* 3 *Edward VI*, pt. 4, membr. 9.

Traditionally this is the site reserved for a founder's tomb, but the coffin dates from about 1270 in style. It bears close comparison with some of that period in the south aisle at Selborne, where Richard de Portesey, the last descendant[1] of our founder's line, was a generous benefactor at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It is therefore not beyond the bounds of possibility that it once contained the remains of the descendant of the founder, enshrined in a coffin of Selborne workmanship. On the other hand, the coffin, at least as now discovered (it was perfect, and of 'Egyptian granite' when dug up in 1843), is far too shallow to contain a real body, although it has drainage holes as if for actual use. Another hypothesis would thus be that it was provided by Sir Richard for the translation of the remains of his Portsea ancestor. The foliated cross upon the cover is not altogether perished.

The life of the medieval parish is, as has been said, without record. No doubt it had its strong points and its weaknesses. The so-called ages of faith were ages of leisure, and the Church was far more than to-day the pivot of all the town's activities, as well as the sole corporate expression of their worship. In the Inventory of 3 Edward VI (to be given below) we find the tally of much that had accumulated during the intervening three hundred years. Beyond this, all that is known for certain is that one of the vicars of the fifteenth or early sixteenth century must have

[1] Baldwin died childless before 1189, when his brother Payne ('Paganus' who witnesses John de Gisor's charter) has succeeded him. Payne's son is Adam de Portsey, and Adam's son is Andrew. Andrew is the father or grandfather of Richard. *Vict. C. H. III*, p. 192.

initiated a devotional Fraternity in Portsea, in accordance with the valuable development of the times elsewhere.[1] For early in the reign of Edward VI a Fraternity is scheduled as appointed in Portsea of the devotion of the inhabitants for maintaining lights there for ever, and to it belong lands and tenements lying in Portsmouth liberty[2] of the yearly rent of 4*s.* 11*d.* and a pound of wax: 11½*d.* of this sum is now resolved, 3*s.* 11½*d.* and the said wax remaining.[3] Further reference to their financial position occurs in the Minister's accounts of Edward VI's second year (1548), where the name of Robert Dubber occurs as a tenant, and their barn is said to be empty.[4] And in the following year on May 10 a grant is made to Thomas Reve and George Cotton 'habendum tenendum et gaudendum' of various lands belonging 'nuper Fraternitati modo dissolutae'; in particular:

(1) 'totum illud horreum nostrum.'

(2) 'Unum parvum Gardinum eidem horreo adjacens, modo vel nuper in tenura sive occupatione Johannis Stubber . . . ex parte orientali Regie vie in Portesey.'

(3) '. . . arrabiles quattuor acras modo . . . in tenura . . . Robenatte Dubber . . . infra libertates de Porchmouthe.'

(4) 'dimidiam acram . . . modo . . . in tenura Ricardi Pepeson jacentes in communi campo vocato Mettelonde infra libertates. . . .'

[1] *Vide* Gasquet's *Parish Life in Medieval England*, pp. 253–273.

[2] As opposed to the Gildable, i.e. the county area of the Parish lying in the kindred of Portsdown.

[3] *Charity Certificates, Southampton*, Roll 52, no. 33.

[4] *Exchq. Min. Accts., Co. Southampton, 1–2 Edw. VI*, Roll 47.

(5) 'unam acram et dimid' unius rode . . . in tenura . . . Anthonii Kenche' together with certain manorial rights at East Greenwich in Kent.'

The last we hear of the possessions of the unfortunate Fraternity is in Elizabeth's reign,[1] when a grant is made to Francis Barker and Thomas Blackway, citizen and clothworker of London, of two acres of land in Lockerley 'necnon totum illud tenementum cum tribus hid' terre cum pertinenciis in Poressaye . . . nuper ffraternitati ibidem pertinentibus.' The manor of East Greenwich occurs here again.

The sixteenth century opened in Portsmouth with a curiously medieval scene. This was no less than the public penance incumbent on the town for the murder, in 1449, of Bishop Moleyns by some sailors in the churchyard of the Domus Dei. For this act of sacrilegious violence the town had been placed under an excommunication, which was formally remitted in 1508 by a process ordained by Bishop Fox. Among those who took part in the ceremony was Stephen Seyward, Vicar of Portsea, who prostrated himself with the rest before the door of God's House.[2] The last glimpse of the pre-Reformation parish is contained in the will of Thomas Stubber, dated 1527,[3] who bequeaths 'my soul to God, my body to be buryed in the high Chauncell of Portesey, item to the Priest of the Church 1 cow . . . item to the high altaur of Portesey 1 sheepe. item I give to my curate for hys paynes for me taken and for discharge of my conscience my bay nagg, 1 cow, vis. viij*d.* in money.

[1] *Pat. Roll*, 8 *Eliz.* pt. 8, membr. 16.
[2] Fox's *Register*, tom. 2, fol. 88–90.
[3] *Borough Records*, pp. 672–673.

item to my curate for my buryall within his [1] Chauncell a kow. His wife "to find a priest to singe for me for oon hole yere within the Church of Portsea he to have for this labour vi*l.* xiiis. iiij*d.*" '

Robert Adam, once vicar of Portsmouth, but in 1509 promoted [2] to the vicarage of Portsea, is among those who witness this document. Whether its terms were carried into effect, or whether Thomas Stubber lived too long for it to be so, we do not know. But the glimpse it gives into the parish life just before the Reformation is a pleasing one.

In 1539,[3] among other returns setting forth the property of Southwick, Thomas Carpenter [4] 'firmarius domini Regis' renders a complex account of the sum of £26 6*s.* 8*d.*, the value of the tithe in wheat and barley, £20 of which are apparently ceded as compensation to William Noxton, the ex-prior. And in 1544, on July 12, the king ratifies an extensive exchange of ecclesiastical holdings and patronage

[1] The Chancel being always in the charge of the rector—in this case the ecclesiastical corporation of Southwick—and the appointed vicar. (Gasquet, *op. cit.* p. 23.)

[2] The value of the church with its chapel (St. Andrew's ?) in 1291 was £30 and of the vicarage £10. The living was always more valuable than that of Portsmouth, as appears in various accounts of the Deanery of Droxford, e.g. *Lib. Regis.* p. 931, D. Droxf.

Portissaria, alias Portsea V. King's Books £12, yearly tenths £1 4*s.*

Portsmouth Vicarage £6 13*s.* 4*d.*—yearly tenths 13*s.* 4*d.*

In the vicariate of Thomas Adam, Portsea is returned as worth in glebe land, tithes, &c., £9 4*s.* 2½*d.* nett. (*King's Books Dioc. Wint., Co. Southampton*, p. 23.)

[3] *Min. Accs., Co. Southampton*, 29–30 *Henry VIII*, Roll 113, m. 33.

[4] Thomas Carpenter evidently was in receipt of a royal grant locally himself; he was admitted Burgess of Portsmouth 1531 (*Borough Records*, p. 341), and Mayor in the same year. He is said by Leland to have built the first Town Hall at his own expense. (*Borough Records*, p. 312.)

with the warden and scholars of the College of Saint Mary the Virgin at Winchester. In consideration of their payment of £671 14*s.* 2*d.* they surrender, besides the rectories of Harmondesworth, Heston, Hampton-on-Thames, Isleworth, and Twickenham, the manors of Shawe and Colthorpe in Berkshire; and receive in return the rectories and patronage of Portsea and Portsmouth with all their properties and revenues. In the seventh year of the reign of James I (1610) a suit[1] was brought by Winchester College against Sir Daniel Norton, the successor of the Whites of Southwick, in respect of the tithes of Hilsea. The complainants urged that these were included as belonging to the parish of Wymering in their grant from Henry VIII; while the defence maintained that Thomas Carpenter had enjoyed the tithes of the hamlet of Hilsea for the last two years of his life, when they were granted, with the rectories of Wymering and Wanstead, to John White, grandfather to Dame Homer, one of the defendants. The case was adjourned for a week that the defendants might show whether their title was by purchase. A further postponement was then made for a full hearing at Serjeants' Inn in Hilary Term next, when the case was brought to an elaborate compromise. The situation, already complex, was further confused by a grant to Anne, James I's consort, of various local revenues for her life, including £32 8*s.* 6½*d.* from the manor of Moundesmere and Stubington, and from the rectories of Portsea and Portsmouth.[2] While these questions as to tithe and patronage were at issue elsewhere, in the parish itself

[1] *Excheq. Court, Term of St. Michael, 7 James I, Nov.* 16.
[2] *Pat. Roll.* 11 *James I*, p. 13, no. 4.

the Reformation evokes an inventory of church goods,[1] which is the more instructive as it belongs to the third year of Edward VI, and so, on the uncompromising and unqualified interpretation of the Ornaments Rubric, should have been the standard from that day to this. The document is as follows:

The inventory of all the goods, plate and ornaments and bells, within the parish of Portsea in the county of Southampton, taken the 22nd day of April in the third year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Edward 6th by Barnard Wyllysman & Thomas Fynden, Churchwardens, and Sir Robert Hieson, Curate, and John Carpenter, Thomas Stubber, Thomas Playfoot, William Wyllysman, John Pepson, John Young, Parishioners: —certify unto Thomas Uvedale, William Whyte and John White Esquires, Commissioners amongst others hereunto appointed by virtue of the King's Majesty's Commission to them, and others in that behalf addressed as hereafter followeth:

Item two bells in the Tower.[2]
Item two chalises of silver.
Item three copes, six vestments.[3]
Item four albes two amyses, two tunicles.

[1] *Excheq.* 2, *R. Augm. Opp., Co. Southampton,* Church Goods, Parish of Portsea $\frac{2}{75}$.

[2] Were these in use until replaced by the new peal of five bells in 1764? The date of the old tower is itself a difficulty. It was called 'modern' in 1843, when however it alone was left standing, and was incorporated into the then new church.

[3] According to *Scudamore Notit. Euch.*, p. 72, this term was often used to describe a complete set of Eucharistic vestments. But vide *Prayer Book Dict.*, p. 517.

Item two hangings for the altar,[1] one painted cloth for the Sepulcre,[2] one paul, one Lent vail.[3]

Item two surplices, two Rochets, four altar clothes.

Item three cross banners, three streamers.

Item two torches, one cross of copper.

Item two candlesticks,[4] one hurst[5] of Iron.

Item one lyche bell, two saintes bells.

Item one lamp of brass, one holy water pot of brass.[6]

Sir Robert Hieson, Curate.

Bernard Wyllysman, Thomas Fynden } Churchwardens.

William Wayte, Thomas Uvedale, John White[7] } Commissioners.

John Carpenter, Thomas Stubber[8], Thomas Playfoot[9], William Wyllysman } Parishioners.

[1] Apparently there was only one altar at Portsea, while there were at least three at St. Thomas'.

[2] This suggests that the Easter Sepulchre at Portsea was not a temporary but a permanent stone construction, such as that most beautiful one at Arnold in Nottingham.

[3] For the Lent veil *vide* e.g. Rock, *Church of Our Fathers*, vol. iv. p. 257ff.

[4] The correct number for use on the altar according to the older custom. A fine rowel or candelabrum of brass is shown in the picture of the old church interior.

[5] For the iron hearse with the pall *vide* e.g. illustration, p. 205, Gasquet, *op. cit.*

[6] Was it the ancient font, or a subsequent one, which was given by Dr. Jacob to St. Stephen's, and thence transferred to St. Alban's? In which were Dickens and Brunel baptised?

[7] Surely John White of Southwick, employed upon the task which brought him his ample reward.

[8] Thomas Stubber (presumably the son of the will-maker of 1527) was Mayor of Portsmouth in 1552 and 1561. (*Borough Records*, p. 312.)

[9] Thomas Playfoot, Jurator or Mayor's Assistant 1533. (*Borough Records*, p. 324.)

Eighty-three years later another inventory is taken of the ornaments of Portsea, which contrasts pathetically with that given above. In 1633, on June 2, Thomas Bigges and Robert Sparkes, Churchwardens, set their names to the following list—the particular purpose for which it was then made being now unknown. The memorandum is made in the Churchwarden's account book, which was discovered in the strong room of the vestry in 1913.

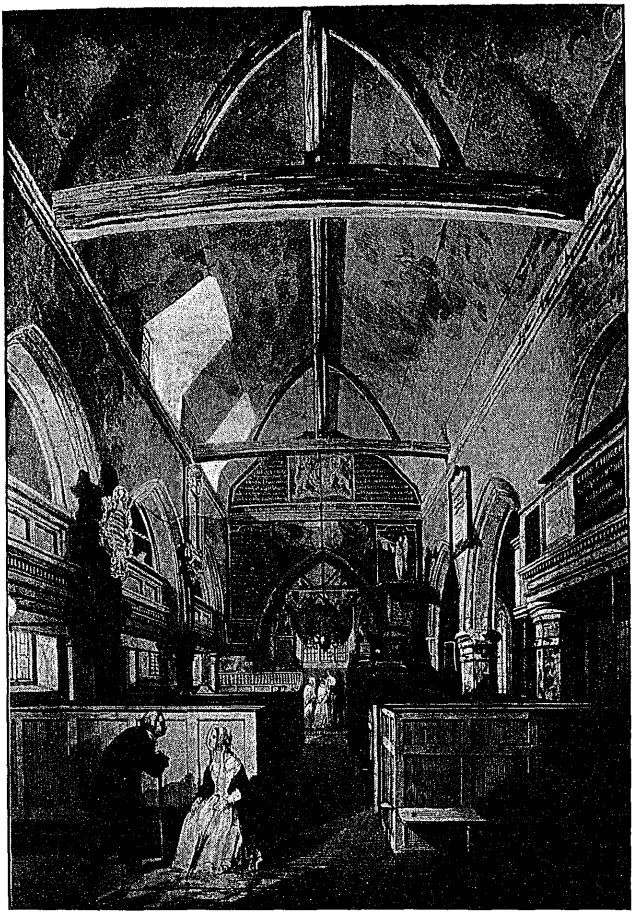
The covers of the old account book had gone long ago, and the inventory, having taken the place of one of them, had almost perished too. It reads as follows:

'1633. Inventory of the Church goods taken June 2, 1633, by Thomas Bigges and Robert Sparkes Churchwardens.

Item. A communion cushen.
A communion linen table cloth.
The lynen surplesse.
A gren carpett.
A pulpett cushen.
The pulpett cloth.
A communion bowle and a kever of silver.
A great Church bible.
A comon prayer booke.
A comon prayer booke for the clerke.

A silver flaggon[1] given by Mrs. Frances Bold in

[1] This valuable gift is handed on carefully from outgoing to incoming Churchwardens, but disappears utterly at the Civil War. Our only old plate now consists of a magnificent silver flagon bearing the names of Joseph Bates / Richard Coles } Churchwardens, and the date 1742, and a silver paten (now in use as a credence plate) to match, the gift of Dr. John Backshell, Vicar 1738–1750.



THE OLD PARISH CHURCH

From an Engraving, 1843

lew of five pounds bequeathed to the parish of Portsea which flaggon is accepted as the full satisfuction for the said bequeathed five pounds by William Bold gentleman deceased husband of the said Frances Bold who added nine pounds to the said five and bestowed it on the said parish of Portsea.

A great chest for to keep the church goods with three lockes.

It. 2 Register bookes
a pickex
a spitter [1] and shovell.'

This melancholy inventory, with its appropriately dismal conclusion, is eloquent of the state of Portsea worship in the seventeenth century. The Laudian movement had no hold here. As a straw shows the quarter of the wind, so a single entry in the accounts for 1638—'for removing the communion table 1s.'—clearly manifests the Puritan outlook of the parishioners, for Parliament did not order the setting of the altar tablewise until 1641. A like spirit is shown throughout the era of the Briefs, when a collection for foreign Protestants is always well supported.

We thus reach that unlovely era when, within the church—over the chancel arch—the place of the Rood is taken by the crown of England, and the weeping figures of Mother and Disciple are replaced by the ungraceful ramping of the Lion and the Unicorn.[2] In the churchyard, such sinister matters as the

[1] A spitter must be some kind of fork, cf. digging a 'spit' deep.
[2] The Royal Arms which now repose in the vestry are pictured as over the Chancel arch in the old church. The carving is good of its kind.

provision of the stocks,[1] the building of the cage,[2] and the construction of the deadhouse[3] arouse a morbid interest. However, as nothing has yet been published concerning the contents of Portsea Registers and Accounts, and even the standard authorities have been misinformed as to their dates,[4] it will be right to give some short introduction to them here.

The oldest of the records is a book of Churchwardens' Accounts, dating from 1632. From thence to 1661 it gives detailed accounts for most years, and subsequently supplies lists of parish officers and summaries of expenses to 1738. The Church revenue is from the rent of Church land, let in 1632 for £3 15s. 3*d.*; from an occasional rate, which at 1*d.* per acre produced £12 8s.; and a very occasional burial in the church. The expenses consist of visitations twice a year, at Petersfield and Waltham; bread and wine for the eight or nine Celebrations;[5] the payment (till 1642) of Pentecost money (Peter's pence or smoke farthings) to the Cathedral Church at Winchester; general repairs, especially to roof, windows, seats, and bells; beating the parish bounds; relief to poor travellers;[6] the constable's

[1] 'We give a paire to the inhabitants of Kingston and Buckland that they shall make up a sufficient pair of stockes att Kingston between this and the xxvth daie of March next in paine to lose . . . xs.' December 1622: *Borough Records*, p. 37.

[2] Churchwardens' accounts. [3] *Ibid.*

[4] E.g. *Vic. C. H.* vol. iii.: 'The Registers date from 1753, except the marriage register which begins in 1754.'

[5] Christmas, Easter, Whit Sunday, the constants. Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Sunday after Easter are also mentioned. Before and after harvest—e.g. in 1632 August 5 and October 7—and the beginning of Lent. In 1633 Shrove Sunday is chosen as fitting.

[6] 'Souldiers seamen and Scotsmen,' in 1633; also 'maimed soldiers.'

expenses for maintaining law and order, and for the King's purveyance ;[1] or, lastly, extraordinary expenses such as ' paid for ship money 9*d*.' (in 1638), or another reminder of the Civil War, ' for 6 carts to carry saltpeter to Hampton 12/-.'

After 1664 we have the lists of parish officers appointed by the Vestry—Churchwardens, one for the Gildable,[2] the other for the Liberty ; Collectors, called later Overseers of the Poor ; and Surveyors of the Highways for Milton, Copnor, Fratton, and for Buckland and Kingston.

This book also contains a more or less complete list of Church Briefs from 1661 to 1738, with an occasional one of earlier date—for instance, one ' for the reparation of S. Paul's Church in London in 1633, signed by Ethan Glascock, Curate, for which was collected £1 3*s*. 10*d*.' These Briefs (which are referred to in the Rubric after the Nicene Creed) were generally issued when a church, town, or sometimes an individual had suffered loss by fire or flood. An undated note reads : ' Gathered in ye —— of Portsea for the poor sufferers by fire in Havant for their speedy reliefe (i.e. before a Briefe could be issued) the sum of 5*li*. os. 0*d*.' So large a sum was seldom raised, unless collected by a house-to-house visitation. For the persecuted Protestants in France or the Palatinate large sums were raised ; in 1694 £1 5*s*., and again soon after £6 3*s*. 4*d*. ; and in 1710 ' for the Pallatine Brief ' £7 18*s*. 1¾*d*. For the sufferers by the ' great storm ' on November 27, 1703, £5 3*s*. 6*d*. was secured. A

[1] E.g. ' the King's poultrie,' and ' composition oats ' in 1634 ; when the King was staying at Tichfield for the carriage of faggots for the King.

[2] Vide *supra*.

curious entry is that for June 27, 1703 : 'collected for the fire in Dorset alias Datchet Street in the Hamlet of Spittlefield in the Parish of Stebunheath alias Stepney in the County of Middlesex, 10$^{s.}$ 3$^{d.}$'; and another : '1715 7ber 11, Colected . . . ye cowkeepers of London £2 os. 7½*d.*'

The list of Briefs is continued in a second volume of Churchwardens' Accounts which was brought to light at the same time, and dates from 1738 to 1794. Foreign Protestants continue to seek and obtain help; while for Colleges in America is collected as much as £12. 12*s.* 6*d.*, and for a fire at Montreal [collected] from house to house £6 8*s.* 2*d.*

The third volume of Churchwardens' Accounts (1793–1820) gives again more detailed particulars of expenditure. In 1793 Thomas Williams is paid for *cloth* for two surplices £7 1*s.* 9*d.*, and Ann Brine for making the two surplices £1 1*s.*;[1] whilst there are repeated entries of 'a new umbrella for the use [of the Clergy] at Funerals,' with 'a pair of clogs' in 1794, but 'a pair of slippers' in 1796. 'Expenses attending the beating of the Parish boundaries' came in 1802 to £5 19*s.*, which recalls a resolution of the Vestry in 1724 to the effect that 'the Churchwardens for the time to come shall ride the bounds of the said Parish but once in three years, and then they shall spend on the same the sum of six pounds and no more.' War and bad harvests brought about a revival of the Elizabethan legislations concerning vermin, and year by year the entry for 'sparrow heads hedge hogs and stotes' grows, till in 1799 it amounts to £10 16*s.* 6*d.*, and in 1814 to £20 8*s.* 7*d.* In 1804

[1] In 1804 two surplices, material and making, cost £7 14*s.* 2*d*

John Thwaites was paid £107 10s. for a clock 'affixed to the Church,' in addition to £50 given for the same by Thomas Fitzherbert, Esq., of Stubbington Lodge. A considerable addition[1] (of some two acres) was made to the churchyard in 1811 at a cost of upwards of £1500.[2] The accounts for 1816 contain the entry 'Lost by Base and Foreign Coin £7 4s. 0*d*,' with the note opposite 'Received by Sale of Foreign Coin £5 14s. 2*d*.' It is, of course, the date that makes this note interesting. In 1817 Thomas Walcot is paid £11 'for hanging the Church with mourning' on the death of the Princess Charlotte, only child of the Prince Regent (afterwards George IV), and wife of Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, afterwards King of the Belgians.

The earliest extant Register of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials begins in 1653. It is a small book of twenty-two parchment leaves, and each part is headed 'a continuance of the Register for Marriages etc. within the parish of Portsea for the present year 1653 and soe following to be adjoined to the 25th [in the case of Burials, the 29th] leafe of the old Booke.' The new book was brought into being under the Act of the Barebones Parliament, and in accordance with that Act the date of *birth* is recorded, though here also the date of baptism. The same Act ordained civil marriages by a J.P.; but it seems to have been inoperative in Portsea parish at least, for both baptisms and marriages were performed as aforetime in church. At the time of the Restoration the entering of births

[1] It had already been enlarged in 1782 by two acres on the south-east.

[2] £1365 of this sum was procured by sale of Church lands.

was dropped, and was not revived till 1694, when a graduated tax was levied on *births*, marriages, and burials to raise money for carrying on the war with France.

We meet with this Act in the second Register, which covers the years 1674–1710. In this book also is seen the effect of the neglect of baptism under the Puritan domination. The first baptism is of a girl aged twenty-one, and in 1695, 1698–1700, we meet with baptisms of adults. On October 1, 1691, Thomas Heather, Vicar of Portsmouth is married at Portsea to Cicely Williams. For a month or two in 1701 the professions of the bridegrooms are recorded, e.g. three seamen, a miller, a shipwright, a yeoman, a 'joyner' and a labourer. In the list of burials there are a few additions to the bare record, as in the case of 'honest Henry Winn, a constant frequenter of ye Church, and this and ye last yeare Churchwarden. Rara avis in Hac Terrâ, buried Oct. 29, 1689'; while in December of the same year, after the names of six members of the Randall family, 'All of ye small-pox, nine in family and in a smal time but 3 left.' On October 4, 1701, is entered the burial of 'Mr. Robert Lancroft, Minister.' In the beginning of the following century two baptisms are recorded as follows:

1806. November 1st.
Isambard Kingdom s. of Marc Isambard Brunel and Sophia his wife, born April 9, 1806.

1812. March 4th.
Charles John Huffham son of John and Elizabeth Dickens.

Here this paper must quickly draw to an end. The omissions are obvious—nothing, for instance, has been said of the Manor of Portsea which passed into the possession of Tichfield for 200 years before the surrender; of the sites of the old Manor House or Vicarage; of the churchyard pond stretching out towards what is now St. Mary's Road corner; of the mounting-block of red sandstone that stood by it; of the stile that gave entrance to the churchyard from the south, the crossbeam of which is still to be seen embedded in the wall fronting upon Alver Road. Nor can there now be introduced any of those motley characters of eighteenth century Portsea—King Cob, Buck Adams, Barnard Honey, Dicky Dart, Sukey Seaton, Tom Binks, or Mother Birmingham, whose very names are full of the flavour of their times. In 1822, by his will, Dr. Samuel Gauntlett, Vicar, in order to remove the nuisance of a too neighbourly ale-house, added certain lands to the Vicarage. This is recorded not only by a tablet placed to his memory by his successor, Charles Henville, but also on two boundary marks, now on the vicarage meadow, bearing the initials G./V. In or about 1830 the vicarage was rebuilt, probably farther to the north than before, if an eighteenth century survey map of Portsmouth is to be held minutely accurate. In 1843 the old church was demolished (excepting the tower), and a new church, larger indeed, but otherwise with nothing to recommend it, was erected. The coins inserted at the laying of its foundation stone are preserved in a wall case in the vestry; curiously enough they are Georgian, not Victorian. This was the church which stood until 1889, when Jacob's dream came true.

THE VICARS OF PORTSEA

1166. Ralph.
1194. William Bouche.

1335. Stephen de Michel-devre.
1349. William Daundely.
—— Walter.
1378. John Batone.
1379. John Rypiar.
—— John Gate.
1385. Walter Henry.
1386. John Alyntone.
1395. John Smith.
1396. John Dryll.
—— Thomas Forman.
1450. William Woode-mare.
1457. Nicolas More.
1464. Michael Godenze.
1485. John Woode.
1492. John Pykman, L.L.B.
—— John Shipton.
1501. Bernard Holden.
1508 (April). Stephen Seyward.
1508. Robert Adam.
1534. Thomas Bold.
1542. John Morton.
1544. Robert Watys.
1548. John Malyn.
1550. Robert Hieson.
1560. Thomas Woodward.
1562. John Whithen.
1563. Nicholas Cane.
1563. Christopher Treden.
1579. David Evans.
1592 (Oct. 28). Edward Bearblock (Beebey ?).
1601. Robert Bayley.
1634. Robert Halle, L.L.B.
1641. Michael Bold, M.A.
1642. William Kingswell.
1651. Timothy Lidyate, M.A.
1662. William Bicknell.
1662. —— Knowles.
1674. Henry Holloway, M.A.
1691. Robert Longcroft, B.A.
1701. Cornelius Norwood, D.C.L.
1716. Evan Jones.
1738. John Backshell, D.C.L.
1750. Philip Barton, D.C.L.
1765. Richard Price, B.C.L.

1782. John Ballard, D.C.L.
1788. Samuel Gauntlett, D.C.L.
1822. Charles Henville, M.A.
1828. John Vanderstegen Stewart, M.A.
1878. Edgar Jacob, M.A.
1896. Cosmo Gordon Lang, M.A.
1901. Bernard Robert Wilson, M.A.
1909. Cyril Forster Garbett, M.A.

II

THE MODERN PARISH

By the Rev. C. F. GARBETT

II

THE MODERN PARISH

By the Rev. C. F. Garbett

If one of the Vicars of the old Church described in the last chapter could revisit the scene of his ministry, he would find himself in the midst of completely changed surroundings. The country village with its meadows and ponds has totally disappeared, and instead of thatched cottages and quiet lanes there spreads a network of streets and red brick houses: he would discover no trace of the medieval vicarage once his home; its foundations are hidden somewhere in the garden which now surrounds the modern clergy house: above all, he would be astonished at finding that the old gabled Church with its ivy covered tower has vanished and in its place stands a cathedral-like building whose lofty tower and pointed roof dominate the crowded town. The change from country to town took place in the nineteenth century. The growth of the Navy and the extension of the Dockyard caused the population of the island of Portsea to increase from 20,000 in 1800 to 40,000 in 1811, and to 240,000 in the present day. It is estimated that the borough is still advancing at the rate of 4000 a year.

The character of the town is that of a great working-class centre. Southsea, it is true, is full of retired officers and their families, and claims to be a fashionable watering-place: North End is the favourite resort of warrant officers, successful tradesmen, and subordinate dockyard officials; but even in these districts there are large tracts of land covered with the dwellings of artisans and labourers. The Navy and the Dockyard are the two great sources of employment; nearly everyone is connected with one or the other. There are hardly any private industries—the few which exist are mainly breweries, building yards, and, curiously enough, stay and corset factories. Extremes of wealth and poverty are both absent; there are very few rich inhabitants; on the other hand, absolute penury is rare, and as there is little casual labour, the proportion of unemployed is normally less than in most towns of this size. The general standard of intelligence is high—excellent secondary schools, keen competition for the first places in the Dockyard examinations, frequent contact with men who have had experience in many lands all tend to encourage mental alertness. Agnosticism is common though rarely aggressive; more often than not it is due either to sheer indifference to religion as a matter apart from all practical life, or to inability to find time to grapple with the intellectual doubts certain to occur to thoughtful minds in an age of criticism. Compared to the North, little interest is taken in social problems, though enthusiastic societies of Socialists and land reformers carry on a vigorous propaganda; for one who takes an intelligent interest in politics there are half a dozen who will excitedly discuss 'Pompey's'

chances in the next football match, or the latest odds on the favourite at some impending race meeting. Picture palaces are extremely popular, and prove a useful counter-attraction to an excessive number of public-houses. The streets, especially in the evenings, are full of life, laughter, and colour; sailors, marines, and soldiers in blue and scarlet uniforms, as they wander up and down the crowded thoroughfares in good-humoured, noisy, high-spirited groups, give an attractive picture of vitality and gaiety rarely found in English towns. Unfortunately the moral problem in garrison towns is always serious, and Portsmouth is no exception to the rule: some streets are full of temptations, the public-house is everywhere, and in the back streets of certain districts are localities which require incessant watchfulness on the part of the police and of the Citizens Vigilance Committee. There can be few places in the land so strategically important to the Church as this great artery of Empire, for from it there goes forth, year by year, to all parts of the world a stream of sailors, soldiers, and dock-yardmen impressed for good or evil with the character which they have developed in Portsmouth, who by their example and behaviour will witness in heathen India, China, and Japan to the value of the nation's Christianity. There is real inspiration to be drawn by clerical and lay worker alike from the thought that what he is trying to do in Church, in Sunday-school, Bible class, and club will contribute to the formation of characters which in the years to come may help to build up the city of God in the furthest parts of the earth.

Out of the ancient parish which once covered the

whole island of Portsea nineteen parishes have been gradually formed. But the mother church still retains a population of over 40,000; this is the maximum to which it can ever attain: every inch of land within its borders is now occupied; possibly the next census will show a slight diminution in population on account of the closing of a number of insanitary houses. The majority of householders are sailors, dockyardmen, or naval pensioners, with a fair sprinkling of clerks, small shopkeepers and elementary school teachers. Many of the girls and young women are employed in the millinery establishments at Southsea, or in one of the corset factories, of which there are five in the parish. The average earnings of a household would be about 30*s.* a week, though in some cases the total is largely in excess of this, in others much less. The houses are small, with little strips of garden at the back; most of them are sanitary and comfortable; the house rent is rather high, and varies from 4*s.* in a poor street to 8*s.* 6*d.* in a better district. There are probably not half a dozen houses in which a servant is regularly kept, though in many the assistance of an 'occasional help' is obtained in the shape of a small and untrained girl who has just left school. The prosperity of the parish is steadily decreasing; those who can afford to do so move out to the more modern houses in the suburbs of the town; many of the streets have thus completely changed their character in the last few years. Only in one part are found real slums; here both moral and sanitary conditions are thoroughly bad, but the Town Council very recently has taken steps to deal effectively with the evil; in any case, this locality is limited in extent and is by no

means typical of the rest of the parish, which is thoroughly representative of a good working-class district.

When in 1878 the Rev. Edgar Jacob, now Bishop of St. Albans, was appointed Vicar of Portsea by the Warden and Fellows of Winchester College, the spiritual life of the parish was at an extremely low ebb. Failing health and increasing years had prevented his predecessor from grappling effectively with the new problems created by a rapidly growing population, which was then about 22,000. The Church was cold, neglected and dirty. The congregations were miserably small both at the morning and evening services; the old parishioners still remember the days when there were rarely more than twenty or thirty at Matins. Hundreds of children and adults were unbaptised. The communicants were few in number. The staff of clergy consisted only of the Vicar and a Curate, whose time was almost entirely occupied in burying and marrying. The Churchwardens did not know how to raise funds for the ordinary Church expenses, and when the new Vicar appealed for £80 for cleaning and repairs he was told he was asking an impossibility.

To this unwieldy, unorganised, neglected parish there came Mr. Jacob with boundless faith and hope, untiring energy, and inspiring enthusiasm. Long before he had been appointed to Portsea he had formed in his mind ideals as to the lines on which a great town Parish should be worked; now he had the opportunity of realising them on a large and striking scale. It is impossible here to give any detailed account of the quickening of the dry bones which followed his

appointment. Out of chaos was brought order, and out of sheer apathy and indifference was created a strong and vigorous Church life. The once empty Church soon filled, numbers of all ages came forward to baptism and confirmation, and the communicants rapidly increased. The old Vicarage was enlarged into a Clergy House occupied by a staff of nine clergy, whose power of work became a legend to later generations; the endowment of the Benefice was increased by the sale of glebe and the judicious investment of the proceeds; the parochial finances were built up on a sound foundation; guilds, classes, and societies of various kinds sprang into existence. An iron church was erected in one of the districts,[1] four Mission halls [2] were built, and a site purchased for development in the future. And while progress was made in the Mission districts, steady advance was also made towards the fulfilment of the great aim which Mr. Jacob had had in view almost from the first—the provision of a church worthy of serving as the centre of a parish of the size and importance which Portsea was rapidly assuming.

At first there was strong opposition to any proposal for the building of a large church; to many it seemed unnecessary and unwise: at one of the early meetings several laymen withdrew on the ground that the Vicar's policy was insane and ridiculous; among those who believed in the necessity of a larger church there was considerable difference of opinion as to the wisest course to adopt. Opinion was at first in favour

[1] St. Barnabas.

[2] Viz. St. Faith's, St. Mary's Mission, St. Stephen's (handed over to St. Stephen's conventional district when formed), St. Boniface.

of enlarging the existing Church, and this was the policy decided on at a public meeting held on August 29, 1882, the one hundredth anniversary of the wreck of the *Royal George*. But though more than one design was prepared by the architect in accordance with this scheme, it was soon found that he had been set an impossible task, and that it was hopeless to expect the enlarged Church to have the necessary qualities of size, dignity, and beauty. In the summer of 1883, at a meeting at the Guild Hall, another scheme was launched: the old Church was to be left as it was, but a new and much larger building was to be erected on the opposite side of the road in the Vicarage garden. This did not prove the final decision; the strong and growing opinion of the parish in favour of the old site asserted itself, and it was determined to demolish the existing Church and to replace it by an entirely new building after plans prepared by Sir Arthur Blomfield. From the first it was resolved that this Church should be of such exceptional size and beauty that it would take its place among the great churches of the country. As the cost of building would be very great, it was decided to carry out the plan by instalments, and to commence by raising £15,000 for the nave and the aisles. For some time it was believed by many that an impossibility had been undertaken, but the scheme for a united parish and the beauty of the architect's designs attracted the attention of the Right Honourable W. H. Smith, who as First Lord of the Admiralty appreciated the responsibility of the nation for the spiritual welfare of the great port which its needs had created, and by his princely liberality in giving, anonymously, £28,000 out of the £47,000

required[1] for the complete Church made it possible for the plans to be carried out as a whole. On August 9, 1887, the foundation-stone was laid on behalf of her Majesty Queen Victoria by the Crown Princess of Germany, and on Thursday, October 10, 1889, the Church was consecrated by Dr. Harold Browne, Bishop of Winchester, in the presence of five other bishops, over 200 clergy, and a vast congregation.

In 1895 Canon Jacob was appointed to the diocese of Newcastle, and a few months later the Rev. C. G. Lang, Vicar of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, Fellow and Dean of Divinity of Magdalen College, formerly Fellow of All Souls, was instituted as his successor. Anxiety had been freely expressed as to whether anyone else could carry on the work of the modern parish when its founder had gone. But instead of any reaction the work of the parish was carried continuously forward, and in every direction there was a further development in its churchmanship and activities. The staff of clergy was increased from twelve to sixteen. The daily Eucharist in the Parish Church was introduced. The congregations morning and evening were larger than ever. Church Councils, to enable the laity to have a recognised place in the administration of the parish, were established successfully in all the districts. The Men's Conferences, since a distinctive feature of the work of Portsea, were inaugurated and soon became the means of influencing a great body of intelligent,

[1] The Bishop of St. Albans has kindly sent the following note: 'The total sum given me by Mr. W. H. Smith just exceeded £29,000, but part of this was for the addition of land to the churchyard; £28,000 roughly represents what Mr. Smith gave to the Church itself, on which when I left we had spent £47,000, including windows, and paid through me.'

thoughtful men who usually stand apart from all religious organisations. Nor were the more material enterprises in brick and mortar neglected. It was during this incumbency that the splendid Institute, with its great hall for Sunday-schools, and meetings of all kinds, was erected. The work of replacing the old iron Mission of St. Barnabas by a permanent church and hall was now commenced, and in the new district of St. Wilfrid's a temporary church was opened.

In 1901 Dr. Lang was appointed Bishop of Stepney; he was followed at Portsea by the Rev. Bernard Wilson, then Head of the Oxford House and Rector of Bethnal Green, but still better known for his great work at Kettering. He was essentially a parish priest, with a whole-hearted love of souls and with a genius for pastoral visiting and class teaching. Under his guidance the communicants' class system was adopted in the Parish in the place of the older guilds, and the work among lads and young men was strengthened and extended. He completed the new Church of St. Barnabas. He raised a large sum of money required for the preservation of the external fabric of the Parish Church, the stonework of which had shown signs of yielding to the salt atmosphere. His greatest work was the building of the Mission Church and Institute of St. Wilfrid's at the cost of over £8,000. His tremendous energy and incessant labours proved too great a strain for a constitution which was naturally not strong, and he died quite suddenly on October 17, 1909, from an illness brought on by overwork.

The result of the ideals and work of these three

great icars is seen in the parish as it exists to-day. It is divided into six districts, each of which possesses a Church and Hall: the largest of these is naturally attached to the Parish Church; this has a population of 15,000 and is worked by the Vicar and five clergy; the other five districts have on an average a population of 5000, with two clergy attached to each. The work of the clergy is not, however, strictly confined to the limits of the parish: there are communicants who live in all parts of the town and who expect to be visited; and besides this some of the staff have special duties in connection with the Royal Hospital, the Infectious Hospital, the Prison, and the Womens' Labour Home.

Some description of its churches and buildings is essential for understanding the principles and methods on which the parish is worked. In the centre of all stands the great Parish Church; far away from Portsmouth it can be seen both from water and land, its lofty tower and long roof rising up from among the thousands of small houses which surround it; its effect is all the more striking as it is not built in the rich quarter of some fashionable town but in the very centre of the dwellings of the working-class. Its total length is 200 feet and width 73 feet. It has a chapel 50 by 24 feet for daily service. On great occasions this Church can hold over 2000, on normal occasions it is seated for 1800. The architect's own description of the principles which governed its construction are given in some notes on the Church published at the time of the Consecration. 'In the architecture no attempt has been made at novelty or originality, inasmuch as while our domestic requirements are continually changing and daily becoming

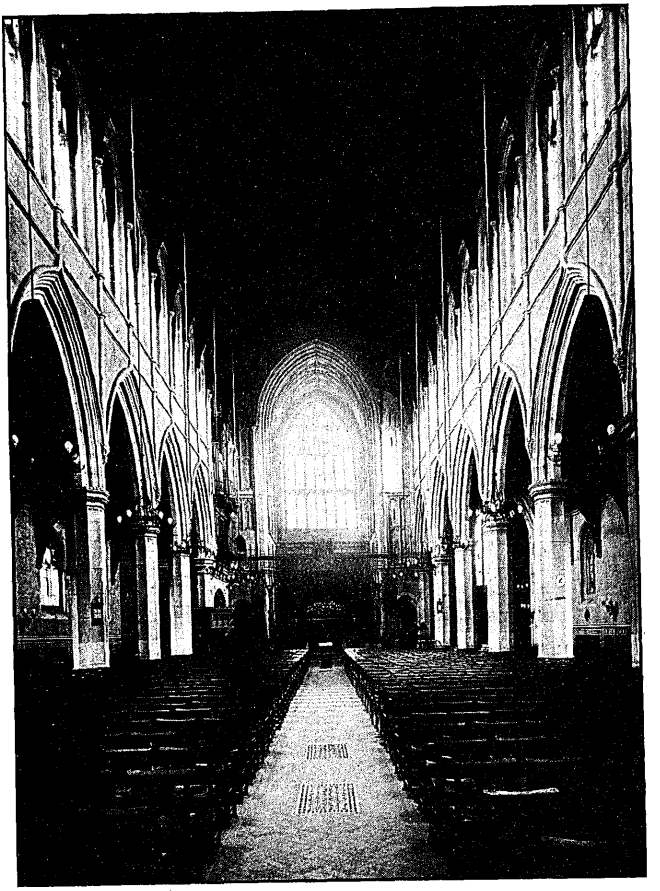


Photo : Russell & Sons, Southsea.

PORTSEA PARISH CHURCH—INTERIOR

more varied and complex, necessitating corresponding changes in our domestic architecture, our requirements in church building remain in all important points precisely what they were three hundred years ago. Although no particular building has been copied, the grand fifteenth-century churches of Norfolk and Suffolk were taken as furnishing a type peculiarly adapted to meet the requirements of a large congregation, and at the same time readily lending itself to a treatment at once impressive, dignified and thoroughly English in character. The general arrangement has been so designed as to give as many of the congregation as possible an uninterrupted view of the east end, the font, and the pulpit, while the floor and proportions of the building, the construction of the roof, the position and arrangement of the pulpit and organ have been carefully studied with reference to acoustic requirements, as far as they can be met without sacrificing other qualities equally essential to make a satisfactory Church.' Externally the walls are built of Portland cement concrete faced with flint pebbles; internally Bath and Ham Hill stone is used. A dado of marble mosaic, five feet high, runs round the Church. The roof is opened timbered, framed in oak. The pulpit is a large rostrum of unusual size. The chancel is formed out of the nave and separated from it by a septum of Staffordshire alabaster, on which stands one of the chief glories of the Church, a screen of gilded hammered iron, so constructed as not to interrupt sight or sound. The altar, raised nine steps above the floor of the nave, is of decorated oak; the reredos is a triptych of carved oak with painted panels and richly decorated. Above is

the climax of all, the magnificent east window which represents our Lord in glory adored by the Church. Criticism was freely directed against the building of a Church on such a scale: it was said it could never be filled. Twenty-five years have proved these forebodings mistaken. Even now, when the mission churches are more numerous and vigorous than they were at the opening of the Parish Church, and many parishes in the near neighbourhood once weak have become strong, the Church is crammed to its utmost capacity on the great festivals and on occasions of special interest, while on ordinary Sunday evenings the congregation is of an impressive size. The Church, as the most beautiful building in Portsmouth, stands as a witness in an age of material progress and religious indifference to the reality of man's belief in a spiritual world, and so must unconsciously affect a far larger number of people than those who pray within its walls.

Three other buildings, the Clergy House in its large garden and field (the sole remnant of a once extensive glebe), the Institute with its large hall and many rooms, and a small Club-room for the young men and lads of the district, form with the Parish Church the great central buildings of the parish. But, besides, there are five smaller groups of churches and halls. The oldest of these is in the district of St. Barnabas in the south-west portion of the parish: in 1879 an iron church was erected; this was replaced in 1901 by a permanent building capable of holding 650; this is the only mission church in the parish consecrated, all the others are dedicated; attached to it is a hall convenient for Sunday-school purposes and clubs. Next in seniority is St. Faith's, Crasswell

Street, a smaller church with accommodation for 300; this serves the poorest district in the parish; adjacent to it is a large institute and gymnasium built by Magdalen College, Oxford, during the period when St. Faith's was the College Mission; a little further off is another small hall for Sunday-school and mission services. St. Mary's Mission is found in a more prosperous district, on the main thoroughfare of the parish: it was opened in 1880, greatly enlarged in 1888, and now provides for a congregation of 400; on one side of the mission church is a hall especially built for Sunday-school work and opened in 1913, on the other side a shop converted into a club-room. Nearer the Parish Church is the Mission Church of St. Boniface, capable of holding 350, with a convenient hall for clubs and meetings. In the north-east district is the largest and latest of the mission churches, St. Wilfrid's; this commenced in a small room known as the Ernest Road Mission, then developed into an iron mission hall, and, finally, into the present large building with a gallery and transept, and is capable of seating 700. Class-rooms which can be made larger or smaller at will open into the central hall, while under the same roof, but separated from the Church by a long corridor, is an institute with two large halls and a kitchen. Besides these five churches licensed for the administration of the Sacraments, a hall, once a chapel, is rented and used as a mission hall under the name of St. Nicholas. Thus the parish has a central church which holds 2000, five mission churches and a hall which between them hold 2500, and eight institutes and club-rooms for secular purposes.

All large parishes with a population of over 10,000

are exposed to two dangers. The work may be so over-centralised that the out-lying districts are sacrificed to the efficiency of a central organisation and lack initiative and energy. On the other hand, where the mission churches have some measure of autonomy and are vigorously and keenly worked, the unity of the parish may be impaired by internal rivalries and jealousies. Both these dangers have been successfully avoided at Portsea, where it has been found possible to reconcile the unity of the parish with the semi-independence of a number of district centres.

The unity of the parish is secured in several ways. First and foremost it is due to the undoubted and unquestioned supremacy of the central Church. The congregations of all the mission churches gladly recognise that they have a real part and share in the Mother Church. It belongs to the whole parish equally, and any district would strenuously oppose and bitterly resent a suggestion to cut it off from the parish Church. The traditions, the prestige, the size and the worship of the parish Church make it the centre of the whole body. In it alone is the daily Eucharist celebrated and daily Matins and Evensong sung and said. In it alone are weddings solemnised. In it are held corporate services for the whole parish, the adult baptisms, the confirmations, the united gatherings of the groups of the Mothers' Union and the C.E.M.S., the three hours' devotion on Good Friday, the special services at the Dedication Festival. So all the parishioners learn to feel that though they may worship in this or that district they are yet members of the parish Church. And, secondly, the unity of the parish is encouraged by the central Clergy House.

The clergy are all under the one Vicar, with whom rests the ultimate responsibility for the work in the districts, and they unite as members of a college for prayer and study as well as for meals and social life; they carry to the work of their several districts the sense of loyalty to the one parish. Finance is also a potent bond of union; it would be impossible for the several districts to be financially independent; the stipends of the clergy are paid from a central fund to which each district contributes a fixed amount; the relief of the sick and poor, the salaries of the lady workers, the Sunday-school and printing expenses are all largely helped from the central funds. The Sunday-schools are governed by the same rules and use the same syllabus; Bible classes and clubs have practically the same regulations. Organisations like the C.E.M.S. and Mothers' Union have their groups and meetings in each district, but are united together by central Councils, which act for the whole parish. The Parish Magazine is also a useful bond of union, as it contains the news of the work of all districts as well as announcements which affect the whole parish.

While in these different ways the unity of the parish is preserved, scope is left for the autonomy of the several districts. No attempt has been made to impose a rigid uniformity on the whole parish. The mission churches have each their distinctive character in worship and in work. There is variety in the services in different missions—in some the Prayer Book is strictly followed, in others the service is of a less formal type, with mission hymns and occasional extempore prayer. Each district has its communicants' classes, its Sunday-schools, its Councils,

its Bible classes and its clubs. Round each Church there is collected a devoted body of workers and communicants who naturally take an interest in the mission which they regard as essentially their own. The clergy attached to each district are responsible for the thorough visitation of their streets, and for the general organisation of the work of the mission church. Thus for the clergy and workers of the different districts there is plenty of opportunity for initiative and enterprise in the development of Church life.

The general methods of work are those usually employed in the normal parish whether large or small. They will be described in detail in the later chapters. Here it is possible only to mention four characteristics which have always marked the work of the parish.

First, great importance is attached to house-to-house visitation. This is not possible in all parishes, and even where it is possible its importance is not always sufficiently appreciated. It is difficult, however, to overestimate the value of regular house-to-house visiting in parishes where the staff of clergy is large enough to undertake it. It brings the clergy into touch with all sorts and conditions of people, and not only with those who are already connected with the Church; it enables them to discover and to welcome new arrivals from elsewhere who might easily in unfamiliar surroundings become careless about that observance of Sunday worship which had been so natural to them in the old parish where they were well known. It shows the people, however indifferent they may be, that the Church does care for them, and is sending its ministers to their very doors to

remind them that the parish Church is theirs. Experience shows that regular visiting is the greatest of evangelising methods: it breaks down the suspicion, prejudice, and hostility which hinder church-going, and men and women who come to know their clergy as personal friends are often drawn gradually to the church in which they minister, and are all the more ready to pay attention to their words from the pulpit because they know the speaker in daily life. The large staff of clergy at Portsea enables the visiting to be carried out with exceptional thoroughness; not only are the sick, the communicants, and the members of the congregation called upon frequently, but every house in the parish is from time to time visited in the year.

Secondly, great emphasis has always been laid on the teaching function of the Church. Multitudes of nominal Christians have only the vaguest of notions as to the nature of the fundamental doctrines of the faith which they profess. Many have drifted away from all definite belief because they have never grasped the essence of Christianity. There are thousands whose religious education ceased with the lessons taught in their childhood. The Church cannot hope to maintain a hold on the more intelligent of its children unless they are taught both the nature of the faith which is in them and the reasons which they can give for it. The Church of England most emphatically asserts the value of the intellect in matters of belief; as Bishop Creighton used to say, it bases its appeal on sound learning. In the parish, therefore, definite instruction must be arranged, not only for the children in the Sunday-school or the Bible class, but also for

those who are older. So at Portsea there are found in every district adult classes for men and for women in which definite Church and Bible teaching is given, and often full opportunities for discussion and questions are afforded. The Sunday sermon can also be used as an important means of instruction; for many years it has been the custom to have courses in the parish Church either at Matins or at Evensong, and sometimes at both, on subjects on which clearer thought and knowledge are required. The Archbishop of York in his book on 'The Opportunity of the Church of England' describes his own practice at Portsea: 'At the Parish Church there was always on Sunday morning or Sunday evening or both, and sometimes on a weekday as well, a definite course of instruction, for which the Vicar made himself responsible. I can remember on Sunday evenings a course of nine months, all too short, on the Sermon on the Mount; of three months on the Ten Commandments; of four months on the Creeds; and several months on the Nature and Teaching of the Old Testament. I can remember on Sunday mornings a course of nearly a year on the Epistle to the Romans; of three months on the Epistle to the Ephesians; and then long courses, either in the morning or the evening, on the doctrine and ordering of the Sacraments; on the history and ideals of the Prayer Book; and on the history of the Church in the early centuries.' Besides Sundays, the weekday services give an opportunity for taking courses of instruction; this is almost invariably done at the monthly communicants' classes.

A third characteristic of the parochial work is the share which the laity take in it The seventeen clergy

and two deaconesses[1] would be quite inadequate to grapple with the needs of the parish if they did not receive the co-operation of hundreds of men and women who, as visitors and Sunday-school teachers, in the choirs and in the clubs, in the Bible class and in various organisations, take their full share in the work. In every department of parochial life the laity are found freely and whole-heartedly assisting the clergy. One of the reasons for this is that they have a real voice and vote in administration. Through the Church Councils they can make their wants known, and through innumerable committees they are able to assist in carrying on the work. Committees are often looked upon as an intolerable nuisance; it is said that they waste time and encourage over-organisation; this is sometimes, of course, perfectly true, especially if the clergy arrange everything beforehand and summon the laity only to endorse their decisions. But the case is totally different when the committee has real power and the clerical chairman makes no attempt to dictate; then, though there may be much discussion, the time is not wasted, for those who are taking part in it learn more and more to feel that they have an equal responsibility with the clergy for the work of the parish in many of its branches.

The casual visitor to the parish would undoubtedly be struck by another feature, the numerous clubs. This would be especially the case if he were taken round in the evening and saw in every district one or more of them in full work. Two reasons account for

[1] The parish owes an immense debt of gratitude to the St. Andrew's Home, which has not only supplied it with two deaconesses but with a succession of lady workers, most of whom have been students at the Home.

their existence. It is impossible to expect men, lads, and girls to spend all their evenings in the small living-room at home. When the working day is over the attractions of the crowded streets, the music-hall, or the public-house are felt. The club provides an alternative. Secondly, the club makes real the ideal of the Christian fellowship; within its walls and in associated games the members of the same brotherhood come to know one another in a way which otherwise might be impossible. The clubs are regarded not as independent social institutions, but as strictly subordinate to the general work of the parish; the members are expected to belong to some Bible class, or to be in some other way in connection with the Church. To increase membership by removing all conditions would be easy, but the clubs would then become a hindrance and not a help to the work. They are treated not as the recruiting ground for Church or Bible class, but as the means of building up the corporate and social life of those who are already members of a class and worshippers in the Church.

The Portsea experiment of keeping a vast parish under one head and working it by a college of clergy has often been criticised. That it would be a success everywhere cannot be pretended. That it has some drawbacks must be admitted. Some of the criticisms directed against this policy have already been met by what has been written above. The arguments that there can be no unity in a parish of this size, or that the outlying districts will suffer through lack of attention have been disproved by the experience of over twenty-five years. The argument that a large staff means both youthfulness and incessant change

is more serious on paper than in reality. Youthfulness brings energy and freshness, and it quickly assimilates the collective experience of a clergy house. Frequent changes on the staff have, of course, serious disadvantages to the efficient working of a parish; the clergy are, however, always asked to remain at Portsea for a longer period than in an ordinary curacy; on an average the duration of their stay is about five years, and there are always some who have been in the parish for a much longer period, possibly ten or eleven years.

Against these objections should be set three or four advantages of the Portsea system. First, it enables the congregation of the district Churches to feel that they have a share in a larger and more extended life than their own. It is an antidote to the narrow parochialism so often the bane of the Church of England. It gives the whole parish the strength and enthusiasm which come from large numbers. It enables it to co-operate more effectively in the Church life of the town, the diocese, and the nation. Secondly, there is some advantage in the fact that the districts as now constituted are under the charge of men who can be easily moved elsewhere if they become overtired, stale or slack, instead of being under vicars whose tenure of office would be perpetual, and who probably could not afford to move even when conscious that their failure had been complete.

Again, the system is good for the clergy; not of course in all cases; there are men who are clearly unfit for a clergy house life, or who require the incessant attention and care of a vicar such as can only be given under quite different conditions of work. One of the chief

justifications for such a large staff as is found at Portsea is that it affords an admirable sphere of training for those who have just been ordained. It would be very difficult to defend the system of concentrating so many clergy in one parish if they consisted of fully trained men who had gained their initial experience elsewhere. Only four out of the numerous assistant clergy who have worked in the parish for the last thirty years have had any previous experience—with these exceptions all have been ordained for work in Portsea. The clergy house teaches men of different views and temperaments to work and live together. It counteracts any tendency to narrowness and exclusiveness. It offers a variety of work which enables men of divers gifts to find scope for their powers. It affords a training in all kinds and degrees of responsibility—the man who commences with the most elementary work in the district may be placed within a few years in charge of a district of 5000, with a colleague working under him, and thus will gain the experience he would acquire as the incumbent of an average town parish, without the burden of ultimate responsibility.

From the financial aspect much may be said for the Portsea plan. It is more economical to work a large area as one parish than if it were sub-divided into a number of smaller independent districts. When the clergy live together in common the stipends are naturally less than in those cases where they have to board and lodge themselves. If the parish were divided into four districts of 10,000, with independent vicars and organisations, the working expenses would be largely increased, to say nothing of the initial cost

of building the necessary vicarages and raising the endowment for the three new parishes.

None who have worked in Portsea will doubt the advantages of the system: clergy and laity alike believe in it. The ideals of the parish as conceived by the Bishop of St. Albans have stood the experience of time. At the consecration of the parish Church he wrote as follows: 'I see no reason why, if there only be an adequate staff of clergy, such a manner of dealing with a large population may not combine the advantages of the old method of sub-division. It is essential that the central Church be supplemented by plainer mission buildings, which become centres of spiritual life in their several localities, and by which the clergy obtain that personal knowledge of their people which is necessary to the due discharge of the Church's work. Such buildings have the great advantage of being available for purposes of all kinds, and not merely for religious services. They become centres of life and work, for religious services, Sunday-school, classes and clubs, entertainments and meetings, and all the social machinery of the parish, while the secular business of the parish is all concentrated in the vestry of the parish Church, and the parish Church is felt to be the property and interest of the entire parish. The effect upon clergy and Church workers of such a great central Church is not the least of its benefits. Instead of men worn out, as are many London incumbents of new parishes too hastily formed, by a work which seems so difficult and heartless as never to permit them to realise that they form part of a great strong body, the tendency of the method which I advocate is to develop men capable of administration,

encouraging each other in their associated work, realising that they are members of a body, in the prosperity of every part of which they have a direct interest; while the great central Church forms the material centre of the whole structure, strengthening and invigorating clergy and Church workers alike, who go from it to the rougher missionary centres or the various streets in the parish, and even taking its part in the great work of extending the Master's Kingdom abroad.' Eleven years later his successor, now the Archbishop of York, in his Annual Report summed up the advantage of the Portsea policy in the following words: 'It secures a large district from the local jealousies and controversies which are apt to visit small isolated parishes. It keeps a large area in touch with a fuller and wider Church life. It prevents men from sinking into dulness and depression under the weight of isolated responsibility. It maintains an atmosphere of freshness and readiness to make new ventures.'

This chapter on the modern parish would not be complete without some account of its worship. The Holy Communion is taught as the central act of worship, and weekly communion is encouraged. No attempt has been made to substitute for Matins a choral Eucharist with a large non-communicating attendance. Once a month and on the great Festivals there is a choral celebration at 11, and Matins is at an earlier hour; to this celebration communicants are invited to come to continue the communion which they have made earlier in the day, and to join in a corporate act of intercession and thanksgiving for the whole parish, while those who have not been present

at the earlier services, mainly older people and those who live at a distance, make their communion. For two reasons a weekly choral Eucharist at 11 has not been adopted; first, if communion at that hour is encouraged the custom of fasting beforehand has to be abandoned quite frankly as impracticable, while if it is discouraged there is always present the danger that non-communicating attendance may, as in the Roman Church, become regarded as a substitute for actual communion; secondly, in a working-class parish an earlier hour is more convenient for most of the communicants. Various experiments at the mission churches and repeated consultation with the parishioners have convinced us that 10 or 11 are singularly inconvenient hours for the majority of the people; the sending of the children off to Sunday-school and the preparation of the Sunday dinner are fatal obstacles to regular attendance either at the celebration or at Matins; on the other hand, 7.30 or 8 are perfectly possible. If the people are to make the Holy Communion their central act of Sunday worship, it seems that in a working-class parish 8 A.M. is normally a more suitable hour than later in the day; this will be increasingly the case as the tendency grows for townspeople to leave their homes on Sunday mornings after breakfast for a long day in the country. The ideal to aim at is a general communion Sunday by Sunday at a conveniently early hour, before breakfast and before the noise and cares of the day commence. On two special occasions the parish has had an object lesson as to what is meant by a general communion; at 5 A.M. on the closing day of the Mission in 1913 there were over 1000 communicants, and again at

the same hour on Ascension Day, 1914, there were over 800. These, of course, were great and exceptional occasions, but there is no reason why faithful and patient teaching on the blessings of weekly communion should not in time lead the majority of the communicants Sunday by Sunday to receive the Blessed Sacrament. We admit we are still very far from the attainment of this ideal; the communicants at 8 A.M. on an ordinary Sunday are few in comparison with those who make their communion on Easter Day, but the numbers steadily increase. Once a month the celebration at this hour is choral, on other Sundays two or three hymns are sung; but at the first celebration at 7 A.M. there is no music or singing.

The parish Church and St. Barnabas have Matins and Evensong on Sunday. The other churches all have Evensong, occasionally shortened and adapted for a mission congregation; but in the morning children's service takes the place of Matins. On weekdays in the parish Church alone there are daily celebrations, Matins, and Evensong.

In Portsea as elsewhere it has been found that the ordinary Prayer Book services require supplementing. Amidst controversy over the revision of the Prayer Book there is general agreement that there should be an appendix with special services. In our parish additional services less formal and more elastic than those found in the Prayer Book are used from time to time, some in Church with the sanction of the Bishop, some in secular buildings or in the open air. These services may be divided into two classes, devotional and evangelistic; in the first group are found the communicants' preparation

classes, the intercession and meditation services, and the prayer-meetings of the C.E.M.S. and of other organisations; in the second are the special mission services with mission hymns and extempore prayers, and the open-air services and processions.

The ritual used in the parish is simple. The size and dignity of the parish Church are such that it is possible to have within it a stately and reverent worship with the minimum of ceremonial. The Cross and flowers on the altars, the colours proper for the season, the surpliced choir, the procession with Cross and banner have their places in our services; but visitors to the church are often astonished at the simplicity of the ritual and at the absence of some of the less important accompaniments of worship to which they have been accustomed elsewhere. The reason for this is found in the existence of a strong Puritan tradition in town and parish hostile to religious ceremonial. The Vicars of Portsea have recognised the vehemence and strength of this sentiment; they have not hesitated to introduce changes which were clearly necessary in the interests of reverence and order, but they have been careful not to move in the minor matters of ceremonial in advance of the good will of the people, and they have avoided unnecessary innovations which were sure to cause pain and anxiety to many of their workers. Further advance in the ritual of the parish Church and missions might not be followed by a serious reduction in the numbers of those who attend their services, but it would undoubtedly mean the quiet withdrawal from active work of a number of the best and most faithful of the aity, and an atmosphere of prejudice and suspicion

would be created which would hinder the work of the parish for many years to come. This policy has been criticised as weak and as lacking in courage, but it is neither weakness nor cowardice when an incumbent deliberately refrains from introducing unessential rites and ceremonies which to him are familiar and beautiful, but which he has good reason to believe will alienate and not help the men and women over whom he has spiritual oversight.

III

THE CLERGY HOUSE

By the Rev. G. A. CHASE

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There are many things which are likely to strike a visitor who comes for the first time to the parish of Portsea. But perhaps one of the greatest surprises which he receives is when he passes through the gate which leads to the vicarage grounds. It is like a sudden transformation scene. He has been traversing a narrow, very towny street with an impression of long monotonous roads branching off on either side. And now, suddenly, he seems to be in the country again. He sees immediately in front of him a lawn set with beds, and beyond that a large field well planted with trees, with possibly a pony and some sheep grazing in it. If it is summer he will sometimes find it hard to realise that he is in a town at all, except for the sound of passing trams. Such a large open space as this in the very centre of the parish is a great boon; for, apart from the healthy surroundings which it provides for the clergy, it is in constant use throughout the summer for garden meetings, garden parties, Sunday-school treats, and other similar parochial activities.

In the middle of this garden stands the vicarage,

in itself an epitome of the recent history of the parish. Built in the year 1830 it has already been enlarged three times. Before the coming of the Rev. E. Jacob it was used strictly as a vicarage, but when he found that the needs of the parish required a larger staff of curates he added to it, and converted it into a Clergy House. The next change—small in itself, but not small in its influence—was made by the Rev. C. G. Lang; he adapted a small room, which had originally been a harness room, as an oratory, to be a centre of the devotional life of the clergy. This chapel has lately been beautified and redecorated, and, in spite of its origin, it serves its purpose most admirably. Canon Bernard Wilson completed the building as it stands at present by converting the stables into a spacious dining-room, and adding a spare bedroom and also two bath-rooms. Yet, even with all these additions, the Clergy House is not large enough, and it has been found necessary to take two small houses near by to provide rooms for six of the staff. Perhaps some day in the future funds will be available to add yet more to the vicarage so that all the clergy may live entirely under the same roof. Of course the accommodation, though sufficient, is not luxurious. Only a few of the staff have separate sitting-rooms and bedrooms; some have a single room divided into two by a partition, while others are content with a bed-sitting-room.

But after all the vicarage buildings are not so important for the parish as the men who live in them. The staff when it is up to full strength consists of sixteen clergy besides the vicar. It is quite exceptional for anyone to take up work here who has had experience elsewhere; practically all are ordained to the parish.

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If, therefore, there is not to be a continuous stream of men leaving and new ones coming to take their place, it is obvious that the usual stay must be a fairly long one. Hence, it is generally understood that a man who comes as a curate to Portsea will stay for at least five years; there are, of course, exceptions, but this is the general rule. Many indeed stay for more than five years, some remaining as many as ten, or even twelve, years before they move elsewhere. Yet, even so, there must be a regular flow of men coming and going; it is rare that Portsea is unrepresented at a Winchester Ordination either by a priest or a deacon.

The life in this Clergy House is a standing proof that unity does not necessitate uniformity. For there are living together here men of all sorts and kinds. They do not all adhere to the same line of thought even in Church matters; is there another parish in England where men are working together in perfect harmony, e.g. from Ely Theological College and Ridley Hall? Of course, what may be called a distinctly party man, whatever school he belonged to, would not be altogether happy here. But anyone who is willing to respect another man's opinions while holding firmly to his own finds in this very variety a source of strength and a stimulus to brotherly love.

But not only is there ecclesiastical variety; there is also theological variety. We have our theologians, some more or less critical; and there are those who are not theologians at all. If they do not all fully understand one another, they all learn to respect one another; they learn that in spite of differences of understanding and interpretation all can unite in devotion to, and work for, a common Master. Then,

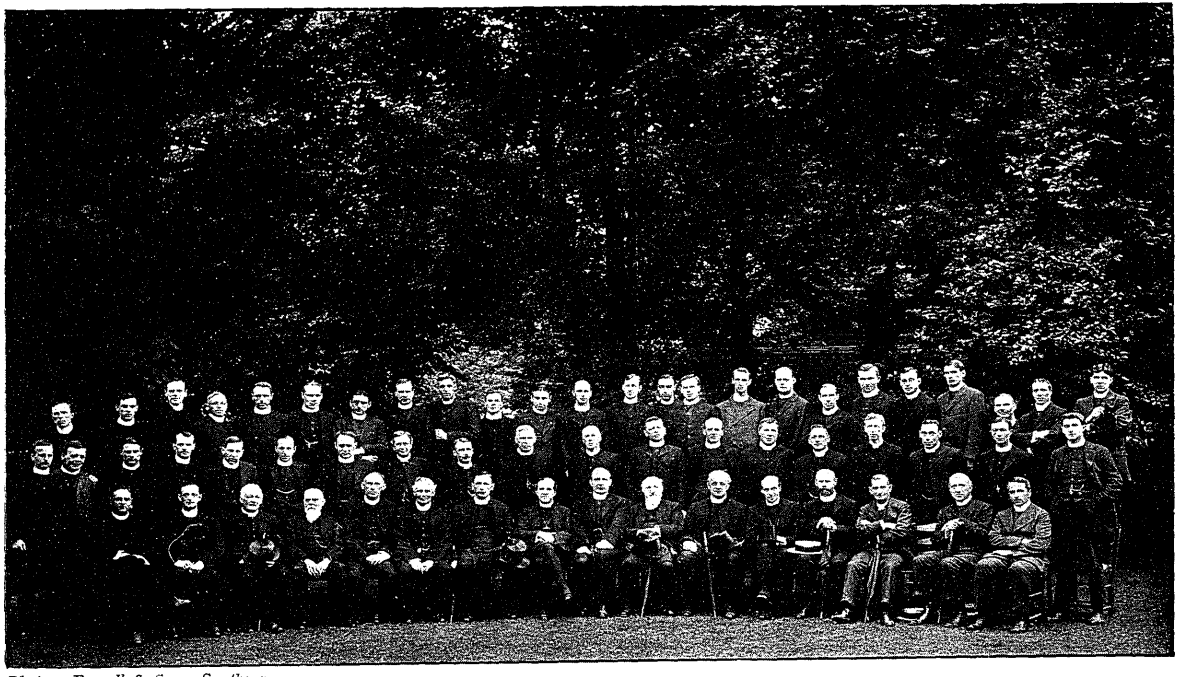

Photo : Russell & Sons, Southsea.

REUNION OF PAST AND PRESENT CLERGY, JULY 17, 1914

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of course, there are also the differences which are found in all such bodies of men; some are good at games, others can play none; some are talkative, others break silence only with occasional words of wisdom; some are easily depressed, others always keep the same even tenor of their way.

Indeed there are many varieties of temperament, many varieties of outlook on life. But underneath them all and deeper than them all there is an indefinable something, the spirit of a common life to which all these varieties contribute, which yet welds them all in one happy harmonious whole; there is an *esprit de corps* about the life of the Clergy House which it is easier to feel than to describe. Yet here lies the secret of a large part of the power of the clergy. This common life affords the inspiration which gives intensity and depth to their spiritual efforts. Probably the very size of the staff thus living together is responsible for much of this wonderful spirit—it is indeed wonderful; it is one of the deepest impressions which a man carries away from Portsea. For the number is too small for the formation of separate cliques, while at the same time it is too large to give rise to that feeling of exasperation which constant rubbing of shoulders is sometimes apt to produce. And, besides all this, one of the happiest results of thus using the vicarage itself as the Clergy House is the bond of intimate fellowship which unites the vicar and his staff. Sharing the same meals, the same life, he gets to know them, and they get to know him, in a degree which can hardly be possible in any other way.

Perhaps it is at meal times that this pervading

spirit is most easily seen. All the staff, whether they are living actually in the vicarage or in the other houses, have their meals together, and these common meals do much to promote the common life. It is extremely refreshing to come in from a long afternoon's visiting to a tea with some sixteen others. In such company no one can remain depressed for long, however disappointing his experiences have been. For where one has been disappointed another has been cheered, and so the one can help the other. It means much for a man to be able to unburden himself of something of what he has been doing to others who he knows can understand and sympathise—whether in his joys or sorrows. But though 'shop' is not entirely taboo at meals it is not encouraged, and conversation takes generally a lighter turn, interspersed at times with some joke whose local allusion is only known to the initiated; such chestnuts live to a hoary old age in the kindly soil of a large dining-room. Yet after all it is impossible to reproduce on paper the spirit which marks such a common life: not even a Boswell could succeed here.

But though it is true that this spirit is nearest the surface, and so can most clearly be observed at meal times, it is by no means confined to them. It pervades the whole daily round, and in common worship and in the sharing of difficulties it runs most deeply—to be felt rather than to be seen. It is found when two of the staff are walking up and down the garden, or sitting enjoying their pipes after the day's work is done, discussing some difficulty that has arisen, and seeking mutual advice and counsel.

Perhaps the best way to describe the life of the

clergy at Portsea will be to take in turn the different occupations which fill up an ordinary day. The common life begins each day as is right with a common act of devotion. Everyone is free to go or not as he wishes to the Celebration of the Holy Communion at 7.30 each morning. But every Monday there is a Corporate Communion when all the staff are present together to join in united intercession for the work of the parish. Each man takes his turn whether as celebrant or as server at this daily Celebration; normally this will come about once a week. Immediately after the Celebration there follows Matins, at which all the clergy are expected to be present. It is a plain said service, except that usually a hymn is sung unaccompanied after the Third Collect. But besides these services in the church, many find great help for their private prayers and meditation in the quiet of the vicarage chapel; here in the early morning several of the staff are generally to be found, seeking strength and counsel for the work which lies before them.

This spirit of corporate devotion is especially emphasised at a Quiet Day which is organised for the clergy on the staff twice every year. The time of quiet begins at Compline on one day and continues until tea-time on the following day. Although parochial affairs cannot be entirely suspended, nothing but urgent business is allowed to break in upon these days which, while they do not take the place of those longer retreats for which opportunities are given in other ways, are yet found to be real seasons of refreshment.

Matins finished at about 8.30, all return to the

vicarage for breakfast, a meal given up for the most part to the reading of letters and newspapers. Here, too, there is the usual variety. Everyone who wishes to have a paper orders what he likes, and all parties and prices are represented. The only papers taken in by the staff in common are *The Times* and two editions of the local *Evening News*.

Soon after breakfast everyone will settle down to the serious work of the morning, which is officially described as study. For at the front door there is a notice which warns all would-be interrupters that 'during the morning the clergy are engaged in study, and should not be disturbed except in cases of necessity.' It is possible, for those who really try, to find some three hours for reading on most mornings of the week. Of course, there are interruptions, some occurring regularly each week, others only occasionally. For instance, on every Monday morning a chapter of the whole staff is held at 9.30. This commences with a service of parochial intercession in the vicarage chapel; after which an adjournment is made to one of the rooms, and then the duties for the week and for the two following Sundays are read out. These have been arranged by the senior curate, and set out in a diary which is kept for purposes of reference in the dining-room. When this has been completed, the vicar will bring forward any matter which he wishes to discuss with the whole staff; and any new experiments which are proposed will be talked over, and progress reported in those which are already being tried. In a word this weekly chapter is the official meeting of the staff to deal with anything which concerns the whole parish. Of course, its length

depends entirely on the amount of business to be got through. Usually it does not last very long, but occasionally it extends well into the morning. As a general rule it is followed by smaller chapters to discuss the work for the week in the smaller districts into which the parish is divided. All this means that hours for reading on Mondays are curtailed, but on most other days the mornings are free.

As the notice at the front door quoted above shows, the essential place of study in a clergyman's life is clearly recognised here. Everything is done which can make the newly ordained curate form good habits in this respect. In the first place, during the first two years of his time on the staff a man is expected to show the vicar each week a time-table of his work during the past week. For the mornings he will have put down what books he has been reading, and how much time he gave to them; for the afternoons the time spent in visiting (*a*) from house to house, and (*b*) special cases; for the evenings the time spent (*a*) in visiting, and (*b*) at clubs. By these means the vicar is able to see that each man is dividing up his time in the proper proportions, and that he is not neglecting any part of his work. To many such a time-table may at first sight seem uncongenial; but experience shows that it is extremely useful, so much so that many keep it up even after they are officially absolved, as a check upon themselves; without its self-criticism they find it so easy to waste and squander their time.

But besides this time-table the vicar also keeps in touch with the men's studies by holding a reading circle for the junior members of the staff. For this purpose

a book is selected, sometimes for the practical reason that it is one of those appointed for the Priest's Examination, sometimes a book on theology, sometimes one on some social subject. Whatever the book may be, everyone is expected to read a set portion of it, and when the circle meets one of the members begins with a short résumé which is followed by a general discussion. These reading circles are of great value not only in making everyone do some systematic study, but also as a means of learning the different points of view from which a subject may be approached.

Sometimes, however, these discussions on books are varied by others on some more immediately practical subject, such as visiting or sermon preparation. At other times addresses are given by people from outside on their own special subject. For instance, we have recently had a series of addresses from Nonconformist ministers describing the positions held by their different bodies, and one from a local Labour leader on 'Labour Ideals.' These addresses may be followed by questions dealing with facts, but controversy is carefully ruled out. Finally, lectures are given on occasional Mondays in the course of the year by well-known Churchmen who have been preaching in the parish on the previous day; these, however, are not confined to the clergy on the Portsea staff, but invitations to them are sent to the clergy working in other parishes in Portsmouth.

Thus in various ways study is encouraged, and it is only those who neglect their opportunities whose reading falls into arrears. Naturally, as time goes on and responsibilities accumulate, more time gets taken

up with preparing sermons and addresses and in other ways. Yet, even so, it is true in this also that where there's a will there's a way, and a very fair amount of reading can be kept up.

At 1 o'clock the gong sounds for a short service of Intercession in the vicarage chapel. On most days of the week the litanies in 'Sursum Corda' are used, but one day is given up to the special intercessions issued monthly in the *Diocesan Chronicle* by the Bishop of the Diocese.

Then follows dinner, the only 'formal' meal of the day; at least it is the only meal at which all are present together at the beginning and wait for one another at the end; at other meals everyone is free to come and go when he wishes. The time immediately after dinner is generally given up to recreation in some form or other. Some may take a turn round the garden, others will go to a club-room for a game of billiards; in various ways it is used for a rest before the day's visiting.

This, of course, is the main order for the afternoon, and a beginning will be made usually about 2.30. Every member of the staff has his own district assigned to him in which he is responsible for the visiting; this will as a rule consist of about 600 houses and some 3000 people. There is no stereotyped manner of visiting to which all have to conform; everyone is free to adopt what system he pleases. During a man's first few months, however, the vicar will exercise a certain amount of supervision, talking over the various methods and discussing their different merits; and, of course, it is always possible to ask the vicar's advice on any difficult question which may arise.

But it is recognised that different men succeed in different ways, and that a considerable amount of freedom to experiment is advisable for beginners. Nor is any uniformity of method in keeping a visiting book insisted on; some use ordinary note-books, others a system of cards; whichever it is, some such record is regarded as necessary for a proper knowledge of any district.

Visiting itself is divided into the two types of house-to-house and special visiting. When first taking over his district a man will probably spend most of his time in the house-to-house visiting. This does not necessarily mean that he will work steadily down each street. Sometimes this course may be practicable, but in many cases it will mean failure; for the people will all have warning that he is coming, and those who do not favour the Church, or indeed any form of religion—the very people he most wants to get at—will take not the slightest notice of his knocks. More often he will pick out certain houses in one street, and when he has been to them pass on to another street, and so gradually cover his district. He himself may have a very clear method in this visiting, but the people will not realise it, and some will answer an unexpected knock who would never come if they knew who their visitor was.

Most of the earlier part of the afternoon will usually be spent by all the clergy in such house-to-house visiting, while the men are still at work and the children at school. Later on, however, as tea-time draws near, such visits will not meet with much success. There are, of course, some families which seem to be visible only at meal-times, and the wise man will

keep a careful note of them. But as a rule people do not want to see the clergy just then, at any rate until they have got fairly intimate with them. After that an occasional visit for a cup of tea is both pleasant in itself, and may do a great deal of good.

There are, however, plenty of things that can be done during this time. There may be some old people who have their tea early and are quite ready for a visit, or some special case where it is necessary to see the husband, and the most certain time to catch him is when he gets back from work. If there are no people in a man's district whom he wants to see, there are generally some patients whom he knows either in the hospital or in the infirmary who will have finished tea, and will greatly enjoy a visit. Several of the clergy are definitely responsible for visiting in the different hospital wards, and once a week they will hold a service there at the end of the afternoon. In this way the time until 6 P.M. is more than filled up, and it is generally possible to get in some three and a half hours visiting each afternoon; this means that it should be possible for all the staff to call at every house in their districts at least once in the year.

But there are various other things which may take up a large part of an afternoon. For instance there are the meetings of the Clerical Society or of the J.C.M.A., which are very valuable, not entirely perhaps for the actual subjects discussed, but also as a means of meeting some of the other clergy of the place. Again, it may happen that when a man is 'in course' he will get very little visiting done for several days. Every member of the staff, except

a few who are excused owing to some special piece of work which they are doing, takes it in turn to be 'in course.' This means that he is responsible for carrying out certain daily duties for a week. In the first place he will have to go across to the vestry about 10.30 in the morning to sign any papers which may be brought, and to do any clerical work that is required. Besides this, if he is a priest, he will normally take all weddings; these are generally arranged for the early afternoon, but sometimes they may break into his mornings. Of course, at times of exceptional pressure, such as Boxing Day, he will get special help, and not infrequently a couple will wish to be married by one of the staff whom they know. The man 'in course' will also take all funerals for which no other arrangements have been made. When the vicar was chaplain to the huge Kingston Cemetery, this meant a long afternoon's work. But now this has been changed, and we are only responsible for taking the funerals of those who have died in our own parish. The work is, therefore, very much lighter, especially as most of the staff prefer, when possible, to take any funeral from their own district themselves. But to complete the story of the day's work of the man 'in course,' his last duty is to take Evensong in the parish church, and he is expected to be in the vestry a short while before the service to sign papers and do anything else which may be wanted.

Evensong is sung each evening at 7.30, a time which will obviously be a very busy one for most members of the staff. Accordingly they are not expected to go to the parish church, but they will say their Office privately at some more convenient time.

It has become the custom for any who find it helpful, and are able to get in from their districts in time, to join together in saying it in the vicarage chapel a quarter of an hour before tea, an excellent plan which at any rate ensures that it is not put off until the last thing at night.

A strenuous afternoon's visiting gives a good appetite for tea at 6 o'clock. This meal is a much more serious one than its name implies; for it is really a combination of tea and supper. This substitution of one meal instead of two is perhaps a little trying at first, but not for long; and in practice it is found to be a great help. For it allows a sufficiently long time in the afternoon in which to get some really solid work done, and at the same time it leaves an unbroken evening. If it has a disadvantage it is that the time just after 6 o'clock is often the best time to catch men and boys, after they have got back from work and have finished their tea, and before they go out for the evening. But after all it is a movable feast; it is not tied down definitely to 6 o'clock, and a late comer, even though he be an hour late, does not have to starve.

After tea a man will probably find something to be done in his own room for a short while. But before very long he will be out at work again. The evening work is very varied and wants careful mapping out each week if it is to keep the right proportion between the different activities. A certain amount of time will be spent in clubs, for they afford a special opportunity of getting to know the men and boys there. But the clergy are not responsible for running the clubs, so that they do not have to spend their whole

time in them. Some evenings will be spent in looking up the members of the different Bible classes; for this is the only chance which those in charge will get of seeing the boys in their own homes, and of getting in touch with their parents. This work is tremendously important, but it takes up a great deal of time; and the boys are very often out, so that a whole evening may be spent with little or nothing to show for it at the end; still it must be done. The evening too is the time for committee and other meetings; obviously it is not possible to go to all of them, but, on the other hand, it is a mistake to go to none; can the laity be expected to turn up when the clergy are never there?

But all these and other similar engagements, which tend to take up even more and more time, are not allowed to rule out all evening visiting in the ordinary districts. Such visiting is of the utmost importance, a fact which is very strongly impressed upon every new-comer on the staff. For it is the only way of really getting at the men in the parish; and though at first they are often shy and try to make excuses, most of them soon open out and thoroughly enjoy a yarn with one of the clergy. Even though religion is not broached at all, a talk may do a great deal of good by removing misunderstandings, and showing that, in spite of his collar, a parson is an ordinary human being; and probably before long they will get to trust him, so that religion may be introduced into the conversation without their drawing back into their shells at once. Systematic evening visiting is far more profitable and it is certainly as a rule far more interesting than the afternoon visiting. In some cases, where an afternoon

visit is misunderstood and the door is resolutely shut in one's face, a visit in the evening to the man of the house works wonders and opens everything up. Thus the evening visiting in a man's own district is in many ways the most important part of his whole day's work, and it is essential that it should not be entirely crowded out.

In these ways the evening is fully occupied until about 10 o'clock, when it is possible to get some cocoa and biscuits in the vicarage in a quite informal way. Finally the day is brought to a close with Compline in the vicarage chapel at 10.15; all the staff are expected to be present at this service if they possibly can, thus closing the day as they began it with a common act of worship. Recently, too, it has been decided to hold a Prayer meeting on one day in each week after Compline, in continuation of those which were held during the time of preparation for the Parochial Mission. This allows united intercession to be offered for special cases known to individual members of the staff, and it has been found to be a real help in the ministry of intercession.

Compline finished, there are generally one or two things which require to be done to complete the daily round, such as entering up visits or writing letters. Then as a rule a fully occupied day is followed by a sound night's sleep. The life is strenuous, but it is healthy because it is simple and regular. Break-downs are happily rare, and a reasonably strong man is able to get through more work in a day than he probably ever realised before to be possible.

But even with this regular life a man must have some breaks if he is to keep fit. It is not possible to

arrange definite days off for the different members of the staff, but all are free to fit themselves in as may best suit their own arrangements, and the vicar is able through the time-tables to see that at any rate the new-comer does take his time off regularly. There is the usual variety of ways of using this time; golf and hockey claim some; others get right away by train, or in the summer take advantage of the numerous steamer excursions from Southsea. Many of the staff, too, spend their Saturday afternoons in football or cricket with the members of the various clubs, and in this way get air and exercise, and at the same time get into closer touch with those among whom they are working. Besides the single days, there are also the longer holidays through the year. A few days after Christmas and a few days after Easter give short breaks, but no Sunday off. The main holiday is in the summer when every one gets away for four Sundays. It is hardly possible to carry through the Sunday duties of the parish with more than four men away at a time, so that these holidays have to be spread over the four months from June to September.

It has not been possible to draw a really adequate picture of the life in such a Clergy House; it must be lived to be understood. It is probable that those who in any way come to help in the work of the parish get as much as they give, through the insight they gain into the spirit of such a life. At a distance the large numbers sound so terrifying, but seen close at hand they are found to be one of the happiest features of the place. If the present writer may give his own personal experience, he must confess that he was very nearly frightened away from Portsea by the thought

of the large Clergy House. But the two years which he spent there have completely converted him. For happiness, for mutual help, for the joy of a common life he knows nothing to equal it even during College days. It is perhaps difficult for one who has had no experience of it to picture the life of a curate who lives in lodgings by himself. If he has any advantages the writer does not know them. The benefits of a community life he does know, and has learned to appreciate them more and more. It is perhaps a truism to say that to share a trouble halves it, and to share a joy doubles it; but this sharing is possible in a special degree in such a Clergy House. Of course, those who live so close together need more than others the spirit of give and take. Mannerisms and a too great sense of dignity must give way under the fire of a kindly chaff; a man who is quick to take offence will not always be happy. But those who can contribute their share in such a common life will draw from it a peculiar help both in the life of devotion and in practical parochial work; and they will find that it gives a power for work in every member far in excess of what he could do by himself alone. There can be but few, if any, among those who have served a curacy at Portsea, who look back on the time they spent there without a deep feeling of thankfulness that they have been allowed to gain experience for their life of special service for their Master amid such invigorating and uplifting influences.

IV

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOLS

By the Rev. H. P. THOMPSON

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The parish has no Church day schools. The Sunday-schools have to bear the whole responsibility of providing Church teaching for the children. The Sunday-school organisation is based upon the division of the parish into districts. Each mission church has its own infant school, for children between the ages of four and eight, and main school, for children between eight and fourteen. The parish Church has two infant schools to supply its big main school. There are also two small 'rough schools' in the districts, since disparity in Sunday clothes seems to be felt more deeply than that in 'week-a-day' ones, and some of the poorer streets cannot be brought to mix with their everyday neighbours.

The size of the problem to be dealt with must be shown by a few statistics. In the year 1912–13 (reckoning from Advent to Advent) there were on the books of the parish an average of 2484 children and 1547 infants: an average attendance in the morning of 1700 children and 890 infants; in the afternoon of 1868 children and 980 infants. The

largest school is the central one at the parish Church, which had an average attendance of 643 children in the morning, and 657 in the afternoon; while its two infant schools together had 299 and 364 infants present in morning and afternoon respectively. There was an average of 88 teachers present, morning and afternoon, in this main school; and of helpers in the two infant schools, 55 in the morning and 60 in the afternoon. The other schools are staffed in about the same proportion. There were 272 teachers on the books of the main schools, and 214 on those of the infant schools, in 1912–13.

Buildings and furniture, as every Sunday-school reformer knows, are often the most determined opponents. The best intentions sometimes have to bow their heads before a Council school desk or an institute bench. Our infant schools are held almost without exception in Council schools, with their little intractable desks, and sometimes a bare 'gallery'; our main schools meet in Church institutes or the mission churches themselves, where again long swivel-backed forms, or rows of chairs battened together, all designed for the longer legs of the adult, have to be adapted as best they may to the requirements of small classes and smaller legs. Access to the Church, again, is not always possible at the hour which might be desired, and the Sunday-school programme has to be designed to fit into the mosaic of Sunday activities. These little difficulties need to be remembered as we come to deal with the working organisation of the schools.

Until 1909 the schools were under what may be

called the traditional system. The infants were taught *en masse*; they learnt the Catechism and many hymns ('Ancient and Modern') by heart; they were told Bible stories. They came to Church once a month, or less often, as opportunity offered. In the main schools the teachers gave two lessons each Sunday, a longer one from some course chosen for the year, and a shorter one on the Catechism, which the children learnt piecemeal, with a series of explanatory texts, printed in a little manual each year. All had the same lesson, which the teachers adapted to their various ages as best they could. There were two services daily: a shorter one in Sunday-school in the morning, and a longer one in Church in the afternoon. Under the limitations of these unreformed methods, splendid work was done by the teachers. But the breath of reform began to stir. A visit by Miss Hetty Lee to the town was, perhaps, the point from which changes started. The beginning was rightly made with the infant schools, which developed one after another into full blown Sunday kindergartens. The S.K.G. system is now universal in the infant schools throughout the parish. There is no need to describe here all the details of this excellent system; those who do not already know them will find them fully explained in Miss Lee's 'New Methods in the Junior Sunday School'; but certain comments may be allowed.

The basis of the whole system is, 'Study the child.' The methods adopted are chosen because they suit characteristics observed in the child. Thus the programme of each session is designed to avoid boredom and restlessness in the child by providing variety

and activity in plenty; the ceremonies of the birthday candles and baptism roll appeal to his imagination; the very simple prayers and hymns, sometimes illustrated by action, are real to him; the stories and nature-lessons are of things which genuinely interest him. That is the secret of success: experience has abundantly justified the change of method, and the kindergarten is the happiest and most efficient part of our Sunday-school work.

Subdivision within the kindergarten, in order to separate out the 'babies' and give them simpler lessons and programmes, is a matter which depends upon accommodation. Where it is possible, we give the babies their own room, and modify the teaching for them; but it cannot be done everywhere.

In the Sunday kindergartens one session is conducted wholly by the superintendent, and block-teaching is given, some story being told; in the other session the helpers give a lesson to their little classes, and this is followed by expression work, for which pencils, crayons, and paper, or sand-trays are the normal apparatus. In some of our schools this helper's lesson is given in the morning, in others in the afternoon. The superintendent in each school is a lady, and several are certificated teachers; they train their own helpers, who are drawn from the junior Bible classes, or are taken when they leave Sunday-school at the age of fourteen. Boys as well as girls take up the work, and do it excellently. They must attend the instruction class each week, or else may not teach the lesson on Sunday. Child-study is made a part of the instruction class, though it becomes difficult to continue this year after year without suffering from repetition

and monotony. This difficulty would be avoided if there were a steady stream of new helpers flowing through, the more experienced ones passing on into the main school. But this is just one point where the S.K.G. fails to work completely: the helpers are so happy where they are, that they are most unwilling to move up to the main school; nor are there always classes waiting for them to take on. The very excellence of the S.K.G. defeats one of its own ends, which is, to be a reservoir for the supply of teachers to the main school.

Once a year there is a short service in the parish church for all the helpers of the parish, and at this new helpers, who have been teaching for at least six months, are formally admitted by the vicar to their office. They receive a signed card, upon which the helpers' prayer is printed.

The infants themselves come to church rarely. In most cases they have a special service about once a quarter, and the rarity of the event invests it with a great solemnity. For days before the first of these occasions at the parish church, the infants were bursting with ill-suppressed excitement, and proclaimed to their day-school teachers the thrilling intelligence: 'We're going to church on Palm Sunday!' And when Palm Sunday came, the intense hush with which they entered the church, the silent gaze with which they stared up to the lofty roof with its carved angels above, and to the altar with its gilt and painted reredos, told how the beauty of God's House sank into their little minds, and made an impression there that will not soon be effaced. The familiar hymns, and signals played upon the organ, took a new meaning and held

new associations. The infant service has won a high place among the acts of worship in our church.

It may be worth mentioning, that most of our infants take a holiday in August. The main schools go on as usual, but the infants are closed. No loss occurs through this, and the rest and refreshment is a considerable gain.

From the Sunday kindergarten the infants pass, at seven and a half or eight years of age, to the main schools, and to a different system and atmosphere. It is much best to have a 'middle department,' in which they can be kept by themselves up to the age of nine, and be given teaching and session programmes, on S.K.G. lines, adapted to their growing years. But this demands separate accommodation, which cannot always be found; and at present there is only one 'middle department' in the parish, and that a small one. This is one of the directions in which an advance may be made. For the most part the infants go straight into the main school, and the change is too sudden for them.

Reform in the main schools followed soon upon reform in the infant schools. During the early part of 1911 plans were being developed and much discussion was held among clergy and teachers. Three principles were laid down: the grading of the lessons; the introduction of expression work; and the provision of apparatus for the use of the teachers. In working the scheme out, on this basis, it became clear that the system of two lessons a Sunday must be dropped, and that one session should consist simply of a children's service. At Advent 1911 the new system came into operation, and has been maintained since with little alteration.

Grading is the very foundation of reform, and no school should be content without it. Our schools are now divided, for lesson purposes, into three grades. Children aged eight and nine form Grade I; those of ten and eleven, Grade II; those of twelve and thirteen, Grade III.

The school year ends at Advent, and then there is a general move-up, classes are reformed, and those who have reached fourteen (and a few who are nearly fourteen) pass out into the Bible class. The lessons are graded correspondingly; and no doubt it would be better, for the teaching, if it were possible to grade the children not by age but by brains. There are, however, serious difficulties in the way of this. The Sunday-school has no effective means by which to test the capacities of the children, and would probably be compelled to grade them by the standards which they reach in the day-school. There would be difficulties with the exceptionally clever child, who would have to stay for too long a period in Grade III, and with the exceptionally dull, who would never rise above Grade I. So long as admission to the school, and dismissal from it, are governed by age, grading within the school can hardly be otherwise than by age. Nor do we want the day-school and the Sunday-school to be quite alike: the child who feels the disability of his dulness in the one should find a kindlier and less exacting reception in the other, and feel that the Church does not judge its children only by their mental capacity. In the small class, too, the teacher's personal attention can level down the differences to some extent. Yet a really stupid child becomes a difficulty as age brings him to teaching which is beyond his powers; and it

might be well, in a large school, to have a special class for dullards, which would be ranked with those of the same age, but would be taught more simply.

The teacher's lesson is given during the morning session. So large a proportion of the children is present in the morning that few are deprived of their main instruction by this arrangement. All the churches are free for children's services in the afternoon, and the gain through this counter-balances any loss due to having the lesson in the morning.

The scheme of lessons is designed to suit the capacities of the different grades. For Grade I Bible stories illustrative of the simpler parts of the Catechism are best; Grade II are capable of following the historical sequence of events, and so may be taught the Life of our Lord or a period of Old Testament history; Grade III are capable of fuller teaching on the Catechism. On this basis a two-years' scheme was drawn up in 1911, by which a child passing its full six years in the school should go through a progressive course of instruction as he rose from Grades I to III. For the first two years, detached Bible stories would be given, bearing upon the simpler teaching of the Catechism, part of which would be learnt by heart; for the next two years, the Old Testament story and the Life of our Lord; for the last two years, a full course of teaching on the Catechism, into which a certain amount of Church History and Prayer-book teaching would be woven. This scheme proved unsatisfactory in regard to verbal knowledge of the Catechism. Powers of memorising are strong at about the age of eleven. So it was arranged that the Catechism should be learnt, after simple explanation, by Grade II during

the time used in the other grades for expression work. This was a compromise, and did not prove successful. A new scheme is now being tried, by which both Grades II and III will have a course on the Catechism every other year, and it will be possible then to attend to the verbal knowledge of it.

The right place of the Catechism is indeed a standing difficulty. That it is wrong to make children learn it without being taught its meaning is plain: it is equally plain that the Catechism is not easy to teach, and that the children do not care for it, even when embellished with stories, so much as for the Old Testament or Gospel story, or the Acts. Nor can the systematic teaching of these be omitted in any sound scheme. The solution lies, perhaps, in the greater use of the afternoon service as an opportunity for doctrinal teaching; but there again rise up the difficulties of teaching and interesting a large body of children of all three grades at one and the same time. The Society of the Catechism will be ready here to pin us down, and say that the St. Sulpice system will meet the whole case; and perhaps it would do so, if we could draft the children of thirteen and upwards into a Sunday Catechism, and unite them there with the junior Bible class. But accommodation is lacking, and all the problems of organisation and machinery are stubborn, and for the time we must be content to make the best of the system that we have.

The syllabus of lessons is drawn up each year before Advent, and is printed in a manual for children and teachers, with various other materials for lessons and services, and the rules about marking, prizes, &c. As a rule, we make up our own courses, and follow

no special book; but the type of lesson owes much to the models provided by the Rev. W. Hume Campbell's books. Weekly classes of instruction are held for all the teachers at one centre: each grade is entrusted to one of the clergy. Since it is impossible to find any one night which will suit all teachers, notes of the lessons are cyclostyled each week and distributed to those who cannot attend the instructions by those who can. Apparatus is provided, so far as possible, to assist the teachers in giving their lessons. Small blackboards made of cardboard, with 'kinopake' chalks, and pictures and maps illustrative of the lessons, are to be had. But there is a lack of good cheap pictures of suitable size for use with a class, which ought to be met by our societies. The children are given penny copy-books of a special brand, and pencils, to do their expression work. This takes the form of drawing, printing texts and verses, or answering questions and writing little essays, according to the children's ages. Ten to fifteen minutes are allowed for it, after the lesson has been given in the morning.

A typical morning session of Sunday-school is somewhat as follows: At 10.5 teachers' prayers are held; at the close of these, doors are opened, and the children flood in. At 10.15 begins the morning service, and the doors are closed, to be reopened once at a convenient moment to admit late comers. The service, which is usually based on Matins, and taken by the clergy, lasts about twenty-five minutes, and may include a short address. After this follows the lesson, given by the teachers, which occupies twenty or twenty-five minutes. Meanwhile expression work

materials have been arranged and issued, and for ten to fifteen minutes after the lesson expression work is done. Then cards and registers are marked, and after a hymn and prayer, the session comes to its end.

The afternoon session is given to the children's service. In most cases the children come straight to their places in church, and at the appointed time service begins. The necessary marking is done after the end of the service.

It would be better if services as well as lessons could be graded. But this is in practice an impossibility: there is but one time and one place for all the children; and we gain in the sense of corporate worship, even though we lose in the appropriateness and reality of the forms of worship. What form the children's service should take is a contentious problem. On the one side are those who urge that Matins and Evensong should rule our choice: the children ought to go out from school knowing their Prayer-book and accustomed to the use of it. They ought even to get accustomed to the Litany. On the other side it is urged that children may learn to know the Prayer-book in this way, without learning to love it: that many of us can remember the dismay with which we greeted the occurrence of the Litany in morning service in our young days; and how the dreary time was occupied in reckoning the numbers of suffrages still to be got through, or running railway lines in the grain of the wooden seats against which we leant.

The children's first need is, not to know the Prayer-book services, but to love their Church, and to learn

the reality of devotion there, so that when they leave Sunday-school, and are free to make their own choice, they may choose to come because they love to come. There will be no difficulty then about learning to use the Prayer-book; and indeed much may be taught about it in Sunday-school and service, without binding the children down to the use of it as the one form for their own services.

The wise course appears to be, for once, a compromise. The Prayer-book forms should be followed sometimes, but with freedom; at other times forms of service should be devised on quite different lines. Variety is of great value; it keeps attention alive, and an element of uncertainty and novelty is refreshing.

The difficulty arises again in regard to the choice of the hymns and prayers that we use. It is of the first importance that the acts of worship, the praise and the prayer, should be genuine to the children. We want them to form habits of praise which really come from the heart, and prayer in which they really feel the nearness of God. They have a natural capacity for devotion and worship which must be reverently fostered. We must not train the children to say and sing with their lips what they do not understand with their hearts. But the ordinary hymns, and the Prayer-book forms and collects, are often far too difficult for the children. Fine as the collects are, many of them are not appropriate to the children's use. Their need is for simple hymns and simple prayers. This we meet to some extent by printing a small selection of hymns at the end of our manual, which is used in conjunction with 'Hymns

Ancient and Modern.' In regard to the prayers, various methods are tried. Simple prayers are composed, and said sentence by sentence, the children following and repeating; simple litanies are drawn up and varied as required; sometimes the litanies in 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' are sung, as prayers. The experiment has been tried of bidding prayer for a subject, and then keeping a short time of silence, followed by a short sentence of prayer. Occasionally the children have been asked to send in their own petitions, and the results have been wonderful, proving that the children know better than many of their elders how to pray. Generally the subject and method of the prayers are announced beforehand. By such variety of method, and by enlisting the interest and the co-operation of the children as fully as possible, the prayers have certainly been made more real than when we rigorously followed the Prayer-book and its collects. From what has been said, it will be understood why we do not have a children's eucharist. The most that seems wise, in this direction, is to allow a few senior classes to be present occasionally, as a great privilege, at a choral celebration. This has sometimes been done at one of the mission churches, and has proved quite satisfactory.

The afternoon children's addresses are a source alike of pleasure and of trepidation to those privileged to give them. It is delightful to talk to children, yet there is the perpetual anxiety, how to secure their attention, and the perpetual doubt, whether the great opportunity is being used in such a way as to leave any permanent impression behind, and to strengthen their faith and their character. Theories are put

severely to the test, when confronted with 700 restless children in a church that could hold more than double the number. Aim, says the expert, at their emotions; you cannot instruct them, of such diverse ages and large numbers; tell them stories; leave the stories to work out their own morals in the minds of the hearers. On the whole, experience supports the expert: it is impossible under such circumstances to catechise effectively: only the simplest answers can be obtained. We have been content as a rule to design some course of stories or lives, which has had a latent purpose: 'Makers of our Bible and Prayer-book,' 'Saints of our English Church,' and the like. Catechism teaching has proved difficult in the big church; in the smaller mission churches it is more possible.

Once a month comes the missionary Sunday. The teachers' lesson is on a missionary subject, and the afternoon address usually follows suit. The children welcome it, and they give practical expression to their interest by bringing their pennies and half-pennies for the missionary collection. Considerable amounts are raised in this way, and the infants are the most generous givers—perhaps one should say the most importunate beggars at home. There is usually a series of six lessons on some country in which the parish has an interest—Melanesia or Western Canada or China. It does not follow that all the money collected goes to the same place, for several of the schools have their own special missionary connections to support. Sometimes there is a special appeal on one Sunday for the hospital, or for a parochial fund.

Men count for more than methods, and we are fortunate in our supply of teachers. At the head of

each school there is generally a lay superintendent, who works with the clergy in charge. To the superintendents falls a large share of the responsibility for details, and of the hard work. They keep the registers, look them over and mark them up each week, and report or visit up absentees. No praise is too high for the service that they render in these and many other ways. The teachers are drawn from many sources, but the majority come from the Bible classes. They must be communicants, and once a year there is a united service of admission, at which those who have been serving long enough to establish their position are admitted to their office by the vicar. In most schools periodical teachers' meetings are held, both for business and for worship and intercession. Sometimes there is a standing teachers' committee. The schools are run on democratic lines, and the teachers are fully consulted when changes are to be made. There is a good proportion of men teachers, but not enough to staff the boys' classes wholly with men: nor would this, perhaps, be ideal. The teachers are numerous enough to keep the classes down to about ten children. Their self-sacrifice and keenness in their work are splendid.

For the training of the teachers there is a weekly instruction class, at which much may be picked up by the way, though child-study and lesson method are not given a recognised place. Portsmouth has been exceptionally favoured by the kindness of its Municipal Technical College, which has for several years arranged classes in methods of teaching, designed to help Sunday-school teachers. Many teachers have taken advantage of these. It has been possible to take a short course

of ten lectures, or a long course of thirty; the latter led up to an examination and a certificate. A good number of teachers, however, cannot find the time for this, and others are alarmed by the prospect of 'criticism lessons.' To help these, a course of short talks on child-study and method was given one winter by one of the clergy, on the night of the instruction classes. A small library of books on Sunday-school matters was also formed, and these were lent out to teachers. Something has thus been done for the instruction of teachers, but the matter is so important that it needs to be taken in hand more thoroughly. Perhaps the clergy should begin with themselves. There is a clergy training week each year at Winchester, and several of the staff have attended it at different times. A Portsmouth Ruri-decanal Sunday-school Council has now come into being, and hopes, with the aid of the Diocesan Organisation, to promote the interests of Sunday-school work, and especially to provide for the training of teachers.

Marks, and their attendant prizes, and treats figure large in the children's vision of Sunday-school. This is not as it should be. The children ought to come because they like to come, and ought to behave because they like order and quiet. As a matter of fact they do like coming, and they do like order and quiet, in their heart of hearts. The abolition of marks and prizes would be in many ways very welcome. But it is a step which we have lacked the courage to take, as yet. Marks are supposed to be a useful weapon of discipline (though but little used as such); and the prizes are, at any rate, a wholesome stream of good literature poured out among the youthful population. So they remain with us.

There are two annual treats. One takes place soon after Christmas. Presence at this depends upon the attainment of a (very low) percentage of marks for the year. It is followed by the prize-giving and an entertainment. The summer treat has to be paid for by the children. There is only one place which can hold them, and by the generosity of its owner 'Leigh Park' suffers its annual invasion by some 1200 riotously happy children at the end of each July. The infants also have their Christmas tea and tree and presents (not 'prizes'); and a summer party in the Vicarage ground. Theirs are the jolliest treats of all!

This discursive summary of Sunday-school method and organisation may be concluded by some reflections on the matters in which further reform seems most desirable. That there is need for the full development of 'middle departments,' for the children just above kindergarten age, has been already noted; and that the method of the Catechism might lighten the problem of dealing with those from thirteen to sixteen years old. For those below thirteen the Sunday-school seems to be a better method. Yet it needs overhauling. We await the genius who will so successfully 'study the child' of this middle age that he will be able to devise a 'programme' to meet his needs, as Miss Lee and others have met the needs of the infants. For a 'programme' is wanted. We are too much tied down to the simple session of service, lesson, expression work. This does not provide enough outlet for the children's energy, or enough variety to keep their interest from flagging. There is plenty to be worked in—hymn and psalm-learning, prayer-book drill, collections, the testing of knowledge of lessons, Catechism, and Bible. Add

to these all the materials that go to make up the usual short morning service—the hymns, canticles, prayers, Bible passage, address—and there is plenty to hand out of which a varied and interesting session programme, or cycle of programmes, could be devised. We want also more ceremonial and machinery. The orderly co-operation of the children in getting out books, pencils, and so forth would produce a sense of system and of responsibility which would help to maintain quiet. The more the children are employed and co-operate, the less will there be of disturbance and disorder. Next, more provision is needed for testing the knowledge of the children. The expression-work books provide one means for this, but more questioning is required, more *vivâ voce* examination of what they have learnt. Where in one room the children are learning three different sets of lessons, this becomes a matter of difficulty; but in a varied morning 'programme' opportunity might be found for it, as has been suggested.

Again, the Sunday-school is not yet brought into close enough touch with the children's homes or with the general congregation. Neither the average church-goer nor the parents know enough about the Sunday-school. Yet it is doing all-important work for the home and for the parish. The presence of parents at the children's service might be urged, and the children employed as missionaries to their homes. An annual Sunday-school Sunday might become an occasion for enlightening the congregation upon the problems and needs, as well as the value, of the schools which belong to them. So the Sunday-school would obtain the recognition which is its due, as the most important of all

the organisations of the parish. For the Sunday-school of to-day must fashion the communicant of to-morrow.

The most disquieting feature of the Sunday-school work is the leakage which takes place when the children pass out into the Bible class. This occurs with the boys more than with the girls. They leave Sunday-school at the age of fourteen, having already begun to feel restless under its control. At about the same time they are leaving day-school and going to work. They obtain a greater freedom on weekdays, and claim it also on Sundays; and they often earn it by working till abominably late hours on Saturday nights. It is not to be wondered at that a good number drop off, and never become regular attendants at Bible class. But something might be done to obviate this, by placing the release from Sunday-school at an age when it would not coincide with the break in other things, and by making the new organisation into which they pass more attractive to them than the Bible class usually can be. For boys of that age a class which consists only of an address, with a couple of hymns and a prayer, does not offer sufficient attraction. The organisations which seem able to hold boys, during the difficult period of adolescence, such as the Catechism, the C.L.B., the Scouts, the White Cross League, do it by other means. They give them responsibility for managing their own affairs, and so develop a corporate spirit; they ask for some good hard work; they secure variety and appropriateness in services and teaching. Is it possible to replace the Bible class, at least for the juniors, with something which embodies these features? Greatly daring, we venture to imagine an organisation on such lines. The boys leave Sunday-school at

thirteen. They enter a new class, whose age runs up to sixteen or seventeen. The class manages itself, is responsible for its own organisation, elects its own officers, keeps its own discipline, and visits up its own absentees. Its Sunday session finds room for plenty of variety in hymns and prayers, and the lads themselves take a great part in these. The curate-in-charge gives the address, and of this notes are taken, and analyses written by some, as in a Sunday Catechism. There is opportunity for discussion. Sometimes there is a lantern. The curate's power is a matter of personal influence, used unobtrusively and in frequent consultation with the class officers. Behind lies the club, on week-nights, to maintain the social side of the corporate life.

This is thrown out as a suggestion, untried as yet, but possibly of value at least in those parishes where the full Sunday Catechism is not feasible. For girls, some modifications would be required. But we must not trespass further into the province of others.

Of weekday organisations for the children the *Band of Hope* is the chief. This exists in each district of the parish, and for the most part flourishes well. The members are drawn from the Sunday-schools, occasionally with the addition of a few who cannot be got on Sundays. Lay-workers bear the chief burden, under their clergy, of organising and managing the work. The meetings are held weekly, usually allowing for a vacation in the summer, and the C.E.T.S. syllabus for the year is generally taken as the basis of instruction. Some members sit for the diocesan examination, and have done well each year. Besides the syllabus, talks and lectures are given on a variety

of subjects; and the lighter side is provided in the shape of entertainments, in which the children themselves are the chief performers. There is a devotional opening of the evening's meeting.

No account of the Bands of Hope would be complete without a reference to their annual summer outing to Sea View. This lies just across the water, on the Isle of Wight, and the steamer journey thither is a never-failing delight. Then, upon arrival, follows a charge down the pier, which can be made to roll almost as much as the steamer, and a long day in an open field and upon the seashore. Sea View only holds second place to Leigh Park in the annals of our children.

Boy Scouts have not been long formed in the parish. There are now three troops, numbering altogether about 110. Their connection with the church is maintained by the requirement that all members should belong to the Sunday-schools (or some senior organisation), and by occasional church parades. Parochial buildings are used for their drills, and it is partly the difficulty of finding a clear space and a clear night in these ever-crowded edifices, and partly the shortage of trained scout-masters belonging to the parish, that has hindered a wider development hitherto. They have, however, slowly grown, and will doubtless continue to spread.

No missionary organisation, such as the King's Messengers, has yet come into being, although one Band of Hope has tried teaching a K.M. syllabus during part of its year. That the children are interested in foreign missions has been shown in the account of our Sunday-school work; and it is not improbable that King's Messengers may soon have to be added to the long list of parochial organisations.

to these all the materials that go to make up the usual short morning service—the hymns, canticles, prayers, Bible passage, address—and there is plenty to hand out of which a varied and interesting session programme, or cycle of programmes, could be devised. We want also more ceremonial and machinery. The orderly co-operation of the children in getting out books, pencils, and so forth would produce a sense of system and of responsibility which would help to maintain quiet. The more the children are employed and co-operate, the less will there be of disturbance and disorder. Next, more provision is needed for testing the knowledge of the children. The expression-work books provide one means for this, but more questioning is required, more *vivâ voce* examination of what they have learnt. Where in one room the children are learning three different sets of lessons, this becomes a matter of difficulty; but in a varied morning 'programme' opportunity might be found for it, as has been suggested.

Again, the Sunday-school is not yet brought into close enough touch with the children's homes or with the general congregation. Neither the average churchgoer nor the parents know enough about the Sunday-school. Yet it is doing all-important work for the home and for the parish. The presence of parents at the children's service might be urged, and the children employed as missionaries to their homes. An annual Sunday-school Sunday might become an occasion for enlightening the congregation upon the problems and needs, as well as the value, of the schools which belong to them. So the Sunday-school would obtain the recognition which is its due, as the most important of all

the organisations of the parish. For the Sunday-school of to-day must fashion the communicant of to-morrow.

The most disquieting feature of the Sunday-school work is the leakage which takes place when the children pass out into the Bible class. This occurs with the boys more than with the girls. They leave Sunday-school at the age of fourteen, having already begun to feel restless under its control. At about the same time they are leaving day-school and going to work. They obtain a greater freedom on weekdays, and claim it also on Sundays; and they often earn it by working till abominably late hours on Saturday nights. It is not to be wondered at that a good number drop off, and never become regular attendants at Bible class. But something might be done to obviate this, by placing the release from Sunday-school at an age when it would not coincide with the break in other things, and by making the new organisation into which they pass more attractive to them than the Bible class usually can be. For boys of that age a class which consists only of an address, with a couple of hymns and a prayer, does not offer sufficient attraction. The organisations which seem able to hold boys, during the difficult period of adolescence, such as the Catechism, the C.L.B., the Scouts, the White Cross League, do it by other means. They give them responsibility for managing their own affairs, and so develop a corporate spirit; they ask for some good hard work; they secure variety and appropriateness in services and teaching. Is it possible to replace the Bible class, at least for the juniors, with something which embodies these features? Greatly daring, we venture to imagine an organisation on such lines. The boys leave Sunday-school at

thirteen. They enter a new class, whose age runs up to sixteen or seventeen. The class manages itself, is responsible for its own organisation, elects its own officers, keeps its own discipline, and visits up its own absentees. Its Sunday session finds room for plenty of variety in hymns and prayers, and the lads themselves take a great part in these. The curate-in-charge gives the address, and of this notes are taken, and analyses written by some, as in a Sunday Catechism. There is opportunity for discussion. Sometimes there is a lantern. The curate's power is a matter of personal influence, used unobtrusively and in frequent consultation with the class officers. Behind lies the club, on week-nights, to maintain the social side of the corporate life.

This is thrown out as a suggestion, untried as yet, but possibly of value at least in those parishes where the full Sunday Catechism is not feasible. For girls, some modifications would be required. But we must not trespass further into the province of others.

Of weekday organisations for the children the *Band of Hope* is the chief. This exists in each district of the parish, and for the most part flourishes well. The members are drawn from the Sunday-schools, occasionally with the addition of a few who cannot be got on Sundays. Lay-workers bear the chief burden, under their clergy, of organising and managing the work. The meetings are held weekly, usually allowing for a vacation in the summer, and the C.E.T.S. syllabus for the year is generally taken as the basis of instruction. Some members sit for the diocesan examination, and have done well each year. Besides the syllabus, talks and lectures are given on a variety

of subjects; and the lighter side is provided in the shape of entertainments, in which the children themselves are the chief performers. There is a devotional opening of the evening's meeting.

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LADS AND YOUNG MEN

By the Rev. P. T. B. CLAYTON

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A parish that neglects its boys is like a country that fails to develop its mineral resources. Its normal pastoral character may be admirable, but beneath the surface, be it never so fertile, lie riches that it is wilful impoverishment to ignore. To the life of the Christian family the boy has a distinct contribution to make. He has by nature an inimitable faculty for response and enthusiasm. Let and hindrance loom large in the perspective of men and women, but you cannot ask too much of a boy at his best. Not unnaturally, in those places (fortunately now growing rare) where nothing is done or even attempted whereby the religion of youth may be fostered and expressed, Christianity remains the undisputed perquisite of middle age. But in the beginning it was not so. The Founder of our religion was, be it said with all reverence, a Young Man; and deep down in the heart of youth there is always towards true religion an answering fire.

Portsea parish is peculiarly rich in the mineral—Boy. Not only is the seam an extensive one, but the

quality is no less remarkable. Although the Admiralty are far from being model employers, yet the dockyard commands an eager labour-market; and Portsmouth thus becomes something of a university of mechanical industries, drawing artisans of the highest level from the northern and western private yards. The sons of these immigrants are not backward in aptitude or ambition, and indeed live the life of John Bright's working man, occupied with their tools by daytime, and their books by night. The possibilities that lie before the pick of them are profound; the obituary notices of chief naval constructors not infrequently show that they started as dockyard apprentices. The entrance examination for these apprentices has as its age limits fourteen and a half and sixteen and a half; every boy passing in will have free tuition in the dockyard school for a year. Those who are in the upper half of the entrance list are drafted into the upper school; the remainder into the lower school. A stern process of sifting then goes on year by year, mainly through an examination which falls in June. About half the first year in each school survive into the second; and about two-thirds of the second year go on to their third year of schooling. Here the course for those in the lower school terminates, after three years, as for a pass degree at Oxford; although a few of the cream of the lower school may have been drafted into the upper during the period. The survivors in the upper school, at the conclusion of their third year, sit for the most critical examination of all, and the first few boys proceed to a fourth year. It is plain that these fourth year boys of eighteen to twenty have thoroughly earned their opportunities.

Unfortunately, at this stage, the Admiralty not infrequently lose their best scholars; for, in spite of the inducements of the Whitworth and Royal scholarships now open to them, many fourth year boys are attracted away by the Civil Service posts in the Customs and Excise departments. Every apprentice who wins his fourth year at school is entitled to go the round of the workshops, and to be given six months probationary work in the drawing office. A boy, when he has reached this stage, is possessed with the Hellenic contempt for tool-work as banausic; indeed, the aspiration towards a job that does not entail daily grime is a most powerful incentive, especially in a town where bath accommodation is lamentably rare. These educational openings are not wholly confined to apprentices. The ordinary yard-boy, who enters without passing the competitive examination, receives the opportunity of a year's free night-classes at the Municipal Technical College.

This is not the place to criticise the dockyard school system. But two faults in it are painfully apparent. In the first place, the class of education given is growing more and more narrowly utilitarian. Even English history is now being made an optional subject. The examinations are of that disastrous type where a good memory for formulæ will utterly outclass any promise of originality or native intelligence. Secondly, it is common property that in all cases but those of the most exceptional ability, influence is the deciding factor in permanent promotion to the higher grades of occupation.

The processes of the dockyard school have thus been sketched here, not because all Portsea boys belong to

it, but because it is the peculiar feature of the place, and is influential beyond its particular radius in setting a unique intellectual standard. Oustide the dockyard, we deal with boys of the usual diversity of trades. Some are electrical apprentices (such indentures costing upwards of £60), others apprenticed to dentists (about £20), others to private foundries or shipyards. Then there is the class who earn from 8*s*. to 14*s*. in the stay factories, but for whom there is small prospect of advancement. A few young school-teachers reintroduce an element of culture. Lastly, there is the great army of post-office boys, butcher-boys, tailors', grocers', drapers' and bakers' assistants, and office boys. For most of these, the wages are as perilously low as the hours are long and uncertain. Some firms simply exist on the exploitation of boy labour ; for instance, an electrical apprentice after three years, who is competent, if he ever will be, to work without supervision, is paid 1*d*. an hour for work for which his employer charges 1*s*. an hour. Upon coming out of his time, he will not receive any offer at a man's wage, but will be forced to leave the town to find work at a standard rate. There are also more ways than one of evading the Factory Acts, and even when a summons is proceeded with by a non-resident inspector—there are none stationed in the town—the magistrates may be relied upon to be leniency itself.

It is from among such boys, to whom life is thus prematurely serious, that our club and class members are to be discovered. Bible class and kindred statistics show that the parish organisations are normally in touch with between four and five hundred boys of senior and junior age. Juniors are by the accepted

division those between fourteen and seventeen ; seniors from seventeen to about twenty-five. There is no definite age for leaving, but marriage (which is early here) generally spells the end of active membership. The choice of seventeen as a minimum age for seniors is arbitrary, but corresponds with the division authorised by the football leagues of the town. It is probably wise to keep sixteen to seventeen as a neutral zone, so that friends with this year's difference of age may not be rigidly separated into the junior and senior clubs.

The mention of clubs brings us on to the main purpose of this chapter. First, it must be recognised that if boys' work differs from ordinary parochial administration in character, it must require a separate and peculiar apparatus. The ordinary agricultural instruments are no more suited to mining operations, than are ordinary pastoral methods to this task. We do not dress up our churchwardens as scouts, or need gymnasia for our Mothers' Meetings. The parish as a whole must therefore be a cheerful giver towards at least the preliminary cost of the boys' plant. When operations are once in full swing, the normal upkeep should not be heavy in comparison with the crushing yield. But apprentices' finances are brittle things. The seam of silver is so sparse as to be negligible, and even the vein of copper is not near the surface. By all means let the club boy meet as much as he can of his weekly liability ; boys have a healthy distrust of the Danaan method of approach ; but when something of their working conditions are understood, the parish will do well to invest a few pounds in subsidising their requirements.

The peculiar social and economic position of our fourteen-year-old is a key to much that is perplexing about him. In effect, he is a man already if judged by his hours of work, a boy only if judged by the criterion of wages. At home, his week's money, however small, wins him a right of independence far in advance of his years. His imitative and impressionable faculties plunge him suddenly into a willing subjugation to the examples of his elders at work. Their likes and dislikes, their virtues and their vices he is eager to assimilate. His fibre toughens, his skin thickens, his will hardens, his outlook coarsens with indescribable rapidity. Meanwhile, the men responsible for this stupendous transmutation are altogether unconscious of the effect they are producing, and pay as little attention to his presence as the spectral sailors of Poe's South Pole leviathan did to the writer of the MSS. in the bottle. He, on the other hand, absorbs their influence at every pore through the long hours (7 A.M. to 5 P.M.) of the working day. He is improved by finding himself in an atmosphere of discipline and responsibility; but there is much that will not improve him, and especially do the fixed habits of swearing and foul talk, which seem to come more from the married men than from anyone else, make the way of a clean-minded boy harder than the way of the transgressors.

Unless the home conditions are exceptionally good, or the boy's own character unusually strong, he will now be travelling very quickly from the East. His prayers, in particular, are liable at this stage to a more or less complete collapse. The period synchronises with his emission from Sunday-school,

an unsatisfactory arrangement, as a colleague points out elsewhere in this book. For there's many a slip between Sunday-school and the junior club, and on the success of that transference everything may depend. Now while there are obviously a host of criticisms which may be directed at the club and Bible class system, it is a curiously common experience in Confirmation interviews to discover that club and Bible class membership in nearly every case is felt to carry with it an obligation to daily prayer. Time and time again a boy, when asked for the Gospel of his own life, explains that his prayers came back to him upon joining the club. True, they are not of a very elaborate or suitable character, being mostly some half-forgotten echo from his childhood; but they are enough to arrest the atrophy of his spiritual nature.

What then is to be done in the parish for the working-boy? What has been the method of dealing with him in the past? What have the results been? In what direction are those methods best modified and supplemented?

The companies' system is the oldest and best system in the parish for dealing with boys and young men. It was inaugurated in 1892, at a time when the vicarage was exceptionally strong in sportsmen. Before this, the club theory had not gone beyond a makeshift gymnasium at St. Faith's, and another at Brookfield Road. This latter was occupied on Sundays by the members of what was to be St. Boniface Mission. As soon, however, as St. Boniface Mission Hall was built in Clive Road, the gymnasium in Brookfield Road had larger and more permanent opportunities, and under the Rev. R. W. Wilberforce became a club

attached to a Bible class. Its popularity was almost its undoing, since it was joined by some of the best boxers and gymnasts of the town; and it needed all Mr. Wilberforce's audacity and high spirits to introduce any semblance of discipline without actually expelling any members. Subsequently, he was transferred to St. Mary's Mission, and many of the members migrated with him, and formed there the nucleus of the Red Company.

His place at St. Boniface was taken by the Rev. E. J. Nelson, now vicar of Blendworth. He found a Bible class at the mission of half a dozen boys which he built into one of nearly a hundred. They took (from Conan Doyle's book) the name of the White Company, the subsequent companies being named in a similar fashion. The rule of satisfactory Bible class attendance was the basis of membership, a lesson learnt from the pitiful spectacle presented by those clubs which were attached to church by name only. It was felt, on the other hand, that church attendance could not be insisted upon in this connection; although the Bible class was not set up as a substitute, but rather as a prelude to the real worship. After a boy had attended the White Company Bible class for a year, he was compelled to attend the Confirmation classes, although he was left entirely free in regard to Confirmation itself. The only permitted alternative to Bible class attendance was Sunday-school teaching.

By degrees each of the companies began to specialise in its activities. The White Company, as was natural under Mr. Nelson's leadership, excelled at cricket; and a field adjoining Stubbington House at the end of Chichester Road was secured. Ultimately they

were driven by the strong flow of the building tide to the ground by London Road, which they continued to hold until 1913. Between 1892 and 1898 some 213 boys signed on to the White Company, a lesser number joining the Red Company at St. Mary's Mission, and the Blue Company at St. Barnabas. A magazine for the three companies was published for several years under the title of the *Tricolour*. The rent of the White Company ground was defrayed by Sherborne School; and Canon Westcott, then the head master, further arranged the annual match against the school at Sherborne, an event that brought with it not only the greatest delight to the visitors, but also to the hosts a glimpse into a life very different from their own.

The aim of the White Company was not merely to cultivate the outdoor life as a recreation, but to use the influence of athletics on character as methodically and thoroughly as it is used at a public school. All the moral cogency that comes from drill and discipline was brought to bear at net-practice and in the field. The best instincts of sportmanship are not always in evidence in club teams drawn from the industrial classes; but here they were given their proper ascendancy, and selfishness or sharp practice, or any tendency to be disloyal to the referee or umpire, was rooted out. The result was that White Company cricket reached a very high—almost a county—standard; especially when Mr. Nelson's work was supplemented by that of the Rev. G. B. Raikes, a cricket blue and international football player.

They were giants in those days; and it is for lesser men to-day to conserve where they constructed. Each mission has to-day its company more or less closely

attached to it. The rule of satisfactory attendance at Bible class still holds good, though latterly there has been some obstinate questioning among the clergy concerning it. The criticism which is levelled against it comes from two quarters. First, there are those who regard anything in the nature of compulsory religious observance with the ingrained distaste which is only too well warranted in a naval town. Secondly, there are those who point to the indisputable fact that Bible class, in spite of all provisos to the contrary, does become a substitute and a poor one—for Church attendance. Both comments are justified, but no alternative to the Bible class rule has yet proved its superiority; and where such large numbers are dealt with, it is not easy to experiment. Two or three points, concerning which the situation is less complex, may however be noted.

First, it is highly important that the Bible class should come first and, that the social life, the sport, the club should spring from it. Where the process is reversed, the club becomes rather a weakness than a strength. It is not an unhealthy token that generally throughout the parish the Bible classes are larger than the clubs they serve.

Secondly, it is essential that a club should never stagnate. There must be a continual immigration and exodus. New material must always be coming forward for treatment, or the upper and nether millstones only grind each other's faces. There must also exist a process—painful though it is bound to be—by which members, who have not responded to influence and are utterly soured and slack, can be removed temporarily or permanently. The club loafer is only doing harm

to himself and to the club that holds him. Thirdly, every effort must be made to prevent the divorce between the athletic section and the communicant section. If this is allowed to take place, the club becomes all body and no soul, and the communicants' class all soul and no body. We are far from desiderating in this parish that dangerous system by which no club member who is not a communicant can hold office in the club. Every good club-member is with us equally eligible for the club committee. But it is also imperative that the club should not be ruled by athletes only. Naturally they will have a predominant position. There must, however, be room in a club for boys of every diversity of interest. Cycling, rambling, swimming, rowing, the building of model boats and aeroplanes, reading, music, photography, Red Cross work, debating are all things which have their clientele, and are equally entitled to consideration, together with the more orthodox forms of recreation. Study the industrial boy as he is, and his interests will be found to extend to a very wide field indeed. It seems one of the most valuable features of the Nonconformist social guilds that they cater for a broader, and perhaps more cultured, intelligence than the Church club usually contemplates. It would be of the greatest interest to see the result of a modified experiment in co-education where the Church club was in use as the medium.

We are thus brought to the perplexing problems of the age which, after all, is primarily the age of puberty. It is absurd in this matter to attempt to force the conventions of another class upon the working-boy. In actual age, he is Smith minor in the Lower Fourth;

but in outlook, in knowledge of the world and its ways, he is infinitely senior to Smith maximus with the cloistered cynicism of his undergraduate surroundings upon him. He is already beginning to earn his own living—that is the crucial difference; and, what is more, girls of his own age are doing the same. He feels it his right—and the social conventions of his class allow the claim—to lead about a sweetheart. It is possible, and it is probably wise, to discourage, and even to ridicule, this proceeding until he is about seventeen. But to do so after that is to drive the instinct underground, and so to court disaster. Nor must he or she be wholly condemned if they change their partnership occasionally. The 'walking out' process must be looked at from a common-sense, utilitarian standpoint. Both parties clearly understand that they are on approval, and it may be that there would be far fewer happy homes among the working-classes in England if it were not so. Genuine love does not often precede the agreement, but may, and often does, spring from it. Meanwhile, it cannot be gainsaid that the influence of a good girl is an ennobling one, and keeps the boy from boorishness and many far worse things. If marriage is to take place at twenty-two or twenty-three, seventeen or eighteen is not an unreasonable age for Japheth to begin the search for a wife. No lesson needs more clear and serious teaching to both boy and girl than the divine origin of love, and its profound significance. The working-boy, if only instructed, has a native fund of honour and integrity, which will not fail him in the time of trial or temptation. It is criminal folly for us to attempt to castigate an instinct that God would have us consecrate.

It is of interest to note, though this is not the place for a full discussion of the moral problem involved, that for the last three years a Local Associateship of the White Cross League has been at work among the young men and boys of the parish, during which time its membership has gone up from four to over a hundred. Its rapid growth and the deep interest its members take in it proves most plainly the intense need of such work among lads. It has now four groups at the various missions, besides two founded elsewhere by members who have left the town. Its constitution is not codified; indeed it avoids business meetings on principle. One or two groups have mid-week meetings for discussion and instruction from time to time, always controlled by their own members. But its whole corporate strength is directed towards its prayer-meetings, which are held week by week on Sunday afternoons at the various centres in turn. Where possible, these meetings are held in the club-rooms, again on principle. Each group chooses its leaders for its meetings from among its own members. The leader's responsibility is to lead the meeting in prayer. Sometimes a set form is used, into which special intercessions are inserted; sometimes the whole service is spontaneous. During the week previous, the secretary to the group concerned gathers in subjects for prayer from the members, and redistributes them. Those who receive one have the privilege of saying a prayer (extempore or prepared beforehand, according to their ability and confidence) for the subject entrusted to them. When in the meeting the time for the intercessions arrives, the leader, still kneeling, reads out the subjects for intercession one by one, and the prayers

come from all parts of the room. The attendance generally averages thirty or forty, the keenest members going round from group to group, and thus forming a solid nucleus of friendship between the missions such as no inter-company social evenings can possibly supply. The reverence and earnestness at these meetings is most impressive, and the tone quite free both from prurience and priggishness. The keynote of the meetings is the struggle for purity of life and conversation, but other subjects are frequently introduced. Prayers are said for the sick, for the clubs, and Bible classes, for the communicants' classes, for help at work, for pals who are being led towards Christ, for success in examinations. The belief underlying their choice is that everything which means much to the boy means much to the heart of God.

At every meeting of the White Cross League prayers are offered for absent brethren; for the Portsmouth boy is a nomad both by nature and necessity, and the list of those who have gone forth from among us, published annually by the White Cross League, runs now into nearly two hundred names. With these the League endeavours to keep in close touch, and on Christmas Day a reunion service is held at which young soldiers and sailors, civil servants, and those in commerce who return home for Christmas come together once more to kneel side by side and knit up their friendship at the feet of Him Who made them one in the old days. More than a hundred came to this service last Christmas Day; and letters from all parts of the world, written to meet them there, showed that the hearts of many more were turned towards the reunion. Thus with its twin basis of the five White

Cross obligations, and the healthy counter-interest in its absent brethren, the League can show a good front to a species of work that is beset with more pitfalls than any other.

The work and province of the Young Men's Communicants' classes remain to be described. As their operations are more plainly visible in what Plato would call the larger letters, the class at the parish church, which is naturally by far the largest, will be the best for the purpose of study. The membership of this class stands at a little over 220, 189 of whom came to the Eucharist here on Easter Day, 1914. The class was founded by Canon Wilson with the object of keeping the confirmed systematically together, and under regular instruction. It is administered by a committee of fourteen appointed for six months, and a secretary elected annually. No committeeman can serve for more than three sessions continuously. As the law stands at present, ten are elected by the class, and four subsequently co-opted. There is considerable competition for election, about thirty candidates usually putting up. The committee meet not less than once a month, and at the close of their meeting (which occurs automatically at 9.40 P.M.) hold a twenty minutes' Intercession service in the vicarage chapel, at which each member reads out without comment the names of those members entrusted to his friendship and influence. Weekly private prayer for those members is also obligatory upon each committeeman. At the beginning of his term of office he receives his list of names and addresses, sorted in part into geographical areas, and in part on grounds of suitability and friendship. Thereupon

he becomes for the six months responsible for notifying, visiting, and influencing these members. Each month two notices are delivered to them, one at least in person. The first in order of time, though not of importance, is a notice of a debate or lecture arranged by the committee for a night usually in the second week. The other notice which goes out towards the end of the month is the notice of the Preparation class to be held at 9 P.M. on the Friday before the last Sunday, and of the Corporate Communion on the Sunday at 8 A.M. The general advantages and defects of this Preparation class system are dealt with elsewhere by the Vicar. So far as the boys are concerned, it works fairly well, about sixty attending the class, and about eighty the Celebration. It undoubtedly establishes the impression that monthly reception is adequate for the normal member (and boys do not wish to be considered abnormal), although there are a number of members who are fortnightly, and even weekly, communicants. At the Preparation class the boys are given a card to help their preparation, somewhat after the type recommended by Canon Peter Green; and this seems to be teaching them the benefits of special intentions.

While the average of attendance is reasonably good, there is the continual weight of lapsed members who for a variety of reasons have fallen away from their communion. Experience shows that of the various causes contributing to this disaster formulated unbelief is rare. Occasionally a member argues himself, or is argued, out of Christianity, but there are many more frequent causes. The most destructive is the *ictus* of the economic pressure which falls heavily on

boys who work in shops on Saturday night and often far on into Sunday morning. The greengrocer's or butcher's assistant, who has finished six days' hard work with a debauch of overtime that finds him cleaning up the shop at 1 A.M. on Sunday morning, is hardly to be blamed for rejoicing him in his bed till Sunday midday. The real wonder is not how many do so, but how many do not.

Another potent cause of absence is the degrading atmosphere of the workshop. Even where a boy is struggling his hardest against the searing of his own soul, the vile obsessment so weighs upon his spirit, that he feels unable to lend to the Sacrament the eyes and ears that on the morrow will again be open to the sights and sounds to which he must be daily exposed. The fear of hypocrisy is the most potent, and at the same time the most pitiful, delusion to our young men. They know what irreparable harm is done by the traitor's kiss; and they prefer the coward's denial. There is also an increasing body of the best opinions among the young men, which becomes alienated by the apathy and double-mindedness of Church people on social problems.

To return for a moment to the social side of the class. Most of this can be closely linked with the club—this is its proper and most profitable mode of expression. We are here just at the opening of a new movement for merging both into a common whole, over fifty members of the class having consented to join the club in a body for this purpose, thus practically doubling the communicant membership of the club. Hitherto, the debates have been the most valuable form of activity, producing not only some first-rate natural ability, but discussions that more than anything else throw

light upon the inner sentiments of the working-boy. To the combined debates, held between the boys' and girls' classes, reference is made elsewhere.

In conclusion, it may be of value to note the direction in which future improvement seems to lie. It is now generally recognised that it is far wiser to ask a boy to give than to receive. Any opportunity of service (which in his case is not only the best, but the only possible, gift) will secure to him those opportunities of sacrifice and self-expression that fire and fan his loyalty and enthusiasm. Thus while the leakage between Sunday-school and Bible class is difficult to check, no boy who has been admitted as a kindergarten teacher has ever lapsed or resigned. Service is already at work in many other guises; the muscles of the athlete or the embryonic diplomacies of the committees are the real builders of the *civitas Dei* among boys. The moral of the great scout movement (though unfortunately it does not, with us, deal much with boys older than fifteen) points clearly in the same direction. But before all things it is necessary that the highest grade of service should not be beyond their attainment. The difficulties, which at present beset the path of him who feels (as truly as ever it was felt) the call to ordination, are still tremendous enough to dishearten the bravest. The need of the Church is admitted; the call of the individual soul cannot be gainsaid; yet the way still remains well-nigh impassable. Melancholy experience leads to the belief that Mr. Chesterton was not far wrong when he called the state of things in regard to the ordination of the working-class candidate the chief disaster of the Church of England.

VI

MEN

By the Rev. C. F. GARBETT

VI

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WORKING men in their attitude to religion may be divided into three great classes. There are the earnest and professed Christians, usually loyal members of some church or chapel; next, there is a small but influential minority which is strongly and aggressively hostile to Christianity, and regards its teaching as untrue, its morality as weak, its influence as bad; between these two extremes there is found a great multitude, neither hot nor cold, but supremely and utterly indifferent to the Christian Faith. It is this last class which is most representative of the working-class attitude towards religion.[1] It contains all kinds of

[1] A typical expression of working-class opinion on religion is found in the pages of a recent novel, 'The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists.' '"Religion is a thing that don't trouble *me* much," remarked Newman, "and as for what happens to you after death, it's a thing I believes in leavin' till you comes to it—there's no sense in meetin' trouble 'arf way. All the things they tells us may be true or they may not, but it takes me all my time to look after *this* world. I don't believe I've been to Church more than 'arf a dozen times since I've been married—that's over fifteen years ago—and then it's been when the kids 'ave been christened. The old woman goes sometimes, and, of course, the young 'uns goes; you've got to tell 'em somethin' or other, and they might

degrees of indifference: there are men who occasionally attend church either to hear some popular preacher, or to please their wives, while there are others who never enter a place of worship except for a marriage or a funeral. This widespread indifference is to be accounted for by many reasons. There are five especially prominent. To many the conditions of life and labour are so exhausting that all their energies and resources are absorbed in the struggle for existence, and they have no leisure for anything which does not directly bear upon their immediate needs. Secondly, there are others with more leisure, but their spare time is all spent in amusements, in politics, or in education: religion is crowded out, for it is to them only one, and the least attractive, of the many interests which claim their attention. Thirdly, there are many who feel that organised religion is something apart from their lives; its services bore them, its preachers appear to speak in an unknown tongue, its visitors, clergy and lay alike, are simply Paul Prys who have nothing else better to do than to interfere with other people's business. Fourthly, there are those who stand apart from the Church because they resent the attitude which so many of its members have taken towards the social problem; they are convinced that the Kingdom of God must be established on earth, and the Christian appears to them as only concerned with the kingdom of the world to come. Branded in their minds is the memory of the failure of Christianity to lead in many of the issues of social and moral

as well learn what they teaches at the Sunday-school as anything else." A general murmur of approval greeted this. It seemed to be the almost unanimous opinion that, whether it were true or not "religion" was a nice thing to teach children.'

righteousness if they do not take the trouble to denounce the Church they nevertheless regard it as an obsolete institution out of touch with all modern life, they see it as a decrepit giant sitting in the cave once occupied by Giants Pagan and Pope, mumbling unheeded warnings and dreary platitudes to a few women and children who have detached themselves from the great army of progress which marches triumphantly onwards towards the dawn. Lastly, there are the thousands who are too uncertain of the truth of Christianity to act upon it; the faith of their childhood has gone, the criticisms and arguments of the agnostic or atheist have filled their souls with doubt, they are not able to reconcile the teaching of science with the statements of the creeds: they are not aggressively hostile, they respect the ideals and ethics of Christianity, but its faith seems to them only a dream, the baseless fabric of a vision, a tissue of fairy tales and doubtful assertions in comparison with the hard and certain facts of the life which they know.

The work of the Church among men should therefore have a threefold object: it must build up the faithful, refute the objector, and win the indifferent. It is quite plain that this cannot be done by the clergy alone; they must rely on a body of men who are ready by life and word to influence their fellows. The work among men in the parish must be very largely done by the laymen themselves, so the clergy must aim at forming a nucleus of men who will take in it an active and efficient part. In most parishes to-day this company of faithful laymen is to be found enrolled in the Church of England Men's Society. This is the

case in Portsea. Its C.E.M.S. now has a membership of over 200 : each of the six districts has its own group, which arranges its meetings and work, and sends its secretary and one other member as its representative to a council for the branch which meets once a month in the vicarage to receive reports and to arrange the work which concerns the whole parish. The delegates carry back to their respective groups for discussion the matters which have been debated at the council. The central council acts for the branch in all dealings with headquarters, with the local federation and with other branches. It arranges the dates and places of the services of admission, of the quarterly services for men, of the corporate communions, of the Quiet Day, and takes an important part in organising the visiting for the men's conference. It is the means through which the C.E.M.S. in the parish is able to act as one body in concentrating its efforts on some special object.

The groups of the C.E.M.S. meet in most cases monthly, sometimes for business, more often for devotion. Experience has shown that the C.E.M.S. cannot be strong unless its foundations are built on prayer. It is very easy for a branch to have only nominal members who wear badges but never attend meetings, or who fritter away their energies in arranging whist drives and socials. It would be very easy to increase largely the roll of membership if all attempt was abandoned to enforce the obligations of the society. At one time there was a tendency for the parochial branch to become overweighted with men who were good Churchmen, but who had neither the inclination nor the time to attend its meetings

or to undertake any regular work. It was necessary to purge the society of those who were proving to it a source of weakness; its membership for a time had to be reduced, but soon steadily increased, while the efficiency of the branch became much greater. Overhaulings of this nature are periodically necessary. Frequent social gatherings have been steadily discouraged, and instead of them a prayer meeting is regularly held. The parish church group holds this once a month, with the permission of the Bishop, in the lady chapel of the parish church. It is usually conducted entirely by laymen, one of whom gives the address and leads the devotions, while other members have the chance of joining in the intercessions. It has been found advisable to arrange beforehand the subjects of prayer for which individual members are responsible. The leader of the meeting introduces the intercessions with some such sentence as 'Let us pray for the work among lads,' or 'Let us pray for God's blessing on our Sunday-schools,' and the member who has sent in that subject for intercession, or who has been asked to take it, offers an extempore prayer or uses some suitable collect. The devotional meetings of the C.E.M.S. held elsewhere in the parish are of a similar character; they are a real opportunity for the exercise of the priesthood of the laity. Twice in the year the members have a corporate celebration of the Holy Communion at the parish church, on Ascension day or on the Sunday after, and on the Sunday of the Dedication Festival. On the second occasion the members of the C.E.M.S. who belong to the choirs of the parish wear their surplices and form a special choir for the singing of Merbecke. At the request

of some of the members a celebration of the Holy Communion takes place every Wednesday at 5.30, and at it there may be usually seen a dozen or more men kneeling in their working clothes to receive the Bread of Life.

Great importance is attached to the Quiet Day for men held on the Saturday before Rogation Sunday. The first of these was held in 1911, at a time when the religious press had been discussing retreats for men. A regular retreat was an impossibility, so it was decided to attempt a Quiet Day. The first address was after evensong on Friday. The men went home for the night and returned to the church on Saturday for the celebration at 7.30. In the morning two addresses were given, in the afternoon a conference was held on a devotional subject, and the day closed with a service of thanksgiving and an address at 5.30. Breakfast, lunch, and tea were arranged in the institute. The day was thus practically spent in the church, the institute, and the vicarage garden. It was not then thought possible to insist on a rule of complete silence, but a room was set aside for all who desired to keep it; a book was read at meal times, and all were asked to observe silence for two or three hours in the afternoon. About forty men attended these Quiet Days in 1911, 1912, and 1913; for many this involved the sacrifice of half a day's wages. In 1914 a new step was taken. It was felt that the vicarage garden and institute did not sufficiently remove the men from the conditions of everyday life, and the desire was expressed that, if possible, the Day should be held away from Portsmouth. So, after an early celebration of the Holy Communion, the men journeyed

out by a special tram to the village of Blendworth, some seven miles from Portsmouth, and there by the kindness of the vicar, an old Portsea curate, they were able to spend the day in perfect surroundings: the addresses were given in a beautiful country church, the meals were held in the village hall, and the men were free to roam about in the glebe meadows. The rule of silence was observed with greater strictness on this occasion, and was not broken until after the conference. These Quiet Days prove a wonderful opportunity of deepening the spiritual life among men who have ordinarily but little chance of meditation and silence, and they give some indication of the blessings which might be received if the diocese had a house for men in which retreats might be regularly held at little cost. It has taken the Church a long time to understand that the layman possesses the same soul as the priest, and that the retreat which the one finds such a benefit to his spiritual life is sure to prove a boon to the other.

Prayer is thus made the foundation of the work of our C.E.M.S. members. In various directions their services are enlisted. No less than eighty teach in the Sunday-schools: some are found in the choirs; some visit for the communicants' classes, the conferences, and the special services; some are ready to speak at open-air services at the street corners: others undertake the more secular work of acting as stewards at meetings and entertainments, or of doing some of the manual work in connection with arranging the stalls at bazaars. For all some kind of work can be found. Definite enterprises have occasionally been undertaken by different groups. In one district the members made

themselves responsible for the painting and redecoration of their church; in another, for the mending of all broken chairs in the institute. For every man there should be some work to do. The Church becomes stronger as it appeals for the active service of its members. Mr. Charles Booth made a wise and true statement when, in his work on 'Religion in London,' he wrote: 'If the churches, instead of demanding of the people "How can we help you?" were to ask "How can you help us?" a road might open out; and the battle might be won if it were found that the people would claim their right to share the work on equal terms, asking for their part, not "How can you help me?" but "How can I help you?"' The influence of laymen who in daily life witness to their faith is more powerful than the exhortations of the clergy, who too often are looked upon as a professional class 'paid to be good.' If the Church relied more on its laymen for preaching and teaching it would have gone a long way towards winning the masses. 'It is not easy to hear and to apply to one's self the exhortations of preachers who, aloft in the pulpit, seem to be carrying out a mere formality; it is just as difficult to escape from the appeals of a layman who walks at our side. . . . Let a peasant or a working-man speak to those whom he meets a few simple words going directly to the conscience, and the man is always impressed, often won.'[1]

But if the Christian working-man is to hold his own in argument, and is to bear his witness effectively, he must receive more instruction. How often is it not discovered that he has weakened his case by

[1] Sabatier, *St. Francis*, p. 71.

advancing arguments which cannot be maintained, or by taking his stand on some text or Old Testament miracle which his opponent knows only too well how to ridicule! Before he can safely teach or argue he must himself learn. To meet this need men's Bible classes exist in all the districts. They are not confined to members of the C.E.M.S.; any man is welcome to attend. They are held in the evenings of the winter months. Different subjects are taken. Sometimes it is a book of the New Testament followed by the class with the open Bible; sometimes the whole session is occupied with a course of addresses on subjects such as 'The Life of St. Paul,' 'The Prayer-book,' 'Why am I a Christian?' 'Church and Nonconformity,' 'The Lives of Christian Teachers'; sometimes a book issued for study circles is used, and the publications of the Student Volunteer Movement have been found especially helpful in this way. The subject is opened by an address from one of the clergy, and then when he has finished questions and discussion follow. This is most important. The discussion is often rambling and the questions irrelevant. The chance mention of Athens or Rome will probably lead some naval pensioner to describe at inordinate length a visit he once paid to the city, but the majority of the remarks will lead to a discussion of difficulties and misunderstandings which the conductor of the class had probably never suspected before. In some of the districts these Bible classes have a membership of seventy or eighty; in others they are much smaller. There are in all 250 men attending these week-night classes in the parish. They are useful not only for the sake of instruction, but as a means by which the older

men who belong to none of the clubs come to know one another better.

But something else is required in the way of more advanced and thorough instruction. From time to time the possibility has been considered of forming a small study circle of fifteen or twenty picked men, who would come at least once a week to the vicarage for instruction and devotion. They would receive in a course covering two or three years the kind of teaching given at a Theological College on the Bible, Church Doctrine, Church History, and Apologetics. The system of tutorial classes adopted so successfully by the Workers' Educational Union would be followed. Such a course of teaching has not yet been found possible in this parish, and for various reasons the attempt has had to be postponed. There can be no question of its value; it would create a body of workers who would be capable in their workshop or elsewhere of meeting the attack on Christianity, and it would form a good preparation and test for those who are thinking of ordination. The Church loses greatly by its failure to secure an adequate supply of working-class candidates for its ministry. Complaints about the shortage of ordination candidates are always being made, but if it became financially possible for the sons of the non-professional classes to come forward there would be no lack of first-class candidates. There are hundreds who have felt a true call to ordination, but financial reasons have blocked their way to a life spent in the direct service of One who was once the Carpenter of Nazareth. Part of the indifference of working-men to the Church is due to their knowledge that its clergy

are drawn from a class other than their own, while their own sons, however earnest and capable, are excluded from its ministry by their poverty.

From time to time it is customary to bring the men together for some special service. Three or four times in the year services for men are held in the parish church. These are wonderful gatherings; they include men of all views, and attract congregations of from 1000 to 1800. The service consists of three hymns, two or three prayers, and the sermon. The Archbishop of York, the Bishop of St. Albans, the Bishop of Winchester, Bishop Taylor Smith, Canon J. G. Simpson, the Rev. P. N. Waggett, the Rev. E. K. Talbot, and the Rev. J. Adderley have been among the preachers. On rarer occasions the men are asked to combine for some open-air demonstration and to march in procession through the streets. Twice this has been done, on a Good Friday and at the opening of the parochial mission. On these occasions over 700 men took part in the procession. The arrangements were carefully made, and some weeks before the day cards were issued to be filled up by those who intended to assist. Such processions have two advantages. They show the general public that men as well as women value religion. On the night of the Good Friday's procession more than one bystander, after watching row after row of men pass by as they followed the Cross through the streets to the theatre, where a mission service was to be held, was heard to say: 'I didn't know that so many men ever went to church.' More important still is the effect they sometimes have on those who take part in them: they are committed openly to the cause of Christ.

A man or lad who thus walks through his town knows that he may be observed by some workmate and exposed for weeks to chaff, ridicule, blasphemy, and to the most galling accusation of all, that he was 'showing off' his religion. On one occasion a young man who had taken part in the procession, on his return to work, was surrounded by his fellows, who with folded hands and up-turned eyes solemnly and slowly marched round and round him. Many a man has hesitated for long before he has promised to join the procession, and when he has at last decided to do so he feels that he has clenched the matter, and has come out openly on the side of Christ. 'I felt I was the proudest and happiest man in Portsmouth as I walked in your procession,' once said a man who had taken long to make up his mind to commit himself completely to Christ.

The C.E.M.S. consists wholly, and the Bible classes largely, of those who are already pledged Churchmen. Some organisation is needed for those who are indifferent or hostile. This is found in the conferences for men which are held during the autumn and winter months in the parish institute on Sunday afternoons. They were started by the Archbishop of York, and have now been in existence for eighteen years. They are opened at 3.15 by a hymn and prayer, then a lecture is given, and this is followed by discussion and questions. The conference was called by the Archbishop of York a School of Good Citizenship. It does not therefore confine itself to the consideration of purely theological or ecclesiastical subjects: its interests are wide and comprehensive. The following are some of the courses taken during the last few years, with the number of

lectures given in each: 'The Old Religion and the New Theology' (6); 'The Higher Criticism' (3); 'Why I am a Christian' (6); 'Problems of Religion' (6); 'Great Religious Revivals' (5); 'The French Revolution' (5); 'The Church and the Puritans' (6); 'The Poor Law Commission' (6); 'The Reports of the Divorce Commission' (5); 'The Land and the Nation' (5); 'Modern Teachers of Religion' (8); 'Famous Books' (6); 'Moral Problems' (7). The addresses are nearly always given by the vicar, though occasionally special subjects are taken by one of the staff, or by an invited speaker, who delivers an address on some problem of which he has expert knowledge. The attendance varies considerably; social and historical subjects are by far the most popular; a course of addresses on 'Socialism' filled the large hall of the institute for seven Sundays with an audience of 600 men, but the attendance averages 250 to 300 on more normal occasions. A social subject naturally attracts a larger number of the Labour party; a literary course brings many of the schoolmasters; for while at the conference there is always a nucleus of permanent attendants who are faithfully there, wet or fine, whether they are especially interested or not, a large proportion of the audience changes with the subject. The conference has a committee which assists the vicar in deciding on the subjects to be taken and appoints a secretary and stewards. There is no register of members, the suggestion of forming one has always been opposed as likely to limit the freedom of the conference, which can be attended by any man whatever his views are on religion, society, or politics. The audience contains Christians and agnostics,

Churchmen and Nonconformists, Conservatives and Socialists. At some time or another almost every denominational or political movement has had its representative explaining his point of view. The majority of those who attend are drawn from the pick of the working-class; but there are also clerks, elementary teachers, tradesmen, and pensioners. The discussion is best on some religious or social subject, weakest on literature or history. The rules which govern the discussion are few and simple—absolute obedience to the chairman's ruling; a time limit of three minutes unless special permission for a longer period is given; and, hardest of all to observe, 'no party politics.' But even this was kept so faithfully during the course on the 'Land and the Nation' that only once, and then inadvertently by the chairman, was the name of Mr. Lloyd George mentioned. After the lecture is finished there is some slight hesitation before the debate begins; the silence is often broken by a member who probably reads a short set speech which, to the never-failing delight of the audience, contains criticisms of what it was thought the opener would have said, but as a matter of fact did not; then the business will begin in real earnest. From the back of the hall a speaker will severely criticise the omissions of the lecturer, or refute some argument he has employed. On the other side another will follow, then perhaps there will come two or three questions, then more speeches. The points are quickly taken by the audience with applause or laughter. A new speaker is sure of an attentive hearing. At a good discussion from ten to fifteen men will rise. Often the debate has to be closured before all the would-be speakers have been able to

catch the eye of the chairman, who during the discussion has been busily engaged in taking notes, so that he may reply at the end to the criticisms and questions.

What are the benefits of conferences of this nature? First, they are of real educational value; they widen the interests of those who attend them and encourage them to think of the larger questions of their day. It is to the interest of good citizenship that men should learn to know something of the history of the problems round which controversy rages, and should have the opportunity of discussing them with others whose views are totally different from their own. Something has been gained when Conservatives, Liberals and Socialists, Churchmen and Nonconformists can discuss their views in the same hall without loss of temper. Men learn to respect one another more, the Liberal comes to see that a Conservative is not necessarily an archaic fool, and the Conservative discovers that a Liberal is not always a knave. One of the greatest compliments ever paid to the conference came from a Socialist, who once publicly stated that it had the broadest platform in Portsmouth. Secondly, the conferences are valuable as a means of setting forth the relationship of Christianity to the subjects of the day; men are not so ready to think the Church is out of all touch with modern life when from a Church platform social, moral, and intellectual subjects are debated; and they discover that Christianity has a message for their own time. Thirdly, and most important of all, the conference gives the chance of stating the Christian faith and of meeting the objections of those who are opposed to it. The difficulty that the clergy are so often faced with is the impossibility

of confronting the agnostic and the honest doubter: they are rarely to be found in church, where the Christian evidence sermon simply confirms the faithful, and the attempt to meet modern objections before an ordinary congregation often arouses difficulties in minds which before had been untroubled with doubt. But with the conference audience the position is entirely different; there are men present who want an answer to their doubts, or who desire publicly to express their reasons for rejecting Christianity. The clergyman is not able to entrench himself in 'Coward's castle'; here he must face a storm of questions and criticism. The mere fact that he defends the Christian faith in a hall where he can be answered tends to show that Christianity is not afraid to come into the open. Five groups of reasons are used to justify the rejection of Christianity: a set of irrelevant objections which range from Balaam's ass to Lambeth Palace; the failure of the Church to abolish social abuses and the glaring inconsistencies of nominal Christians; the problem of pain; the difficulty that Christianity cannot be proved by the same intellectual processes which are employed in natural science and mathematics; and, finally, a whole mass of objections which are based on a complete misunderstanding as to the true meaning and teaching of Christianity. Theories of the Atonement, of eternal punishment, and of inspiration which no educated Churchman would now hold or defend are denounced as fatal obstacles to faith. Often and often what is rejected is not Christianity at all, but some grotesque caricature of its teaching. These are the difficulties which can be met in the conference. The agnostic who has triumphed

in the workshop over some partially instructed Christians finds his argument much more vulnerable when he advances it in the presence of those who have had a better education. Often some honest misunderstanding is removed; often the answer is given to some objection. The conference is a standing witness that the Church is eager and ready to face fair discussion and criticism. Many who have come at first from sheer delight in debate, or with the jubilant hope of seeing 'the parson floored,' have gradually gained a truer knowledge of Christianity; and even when unable to accept it have often lost the bitterness and hatred which once were aroused at the thought of religion. Convinced Christians too have learnt to sympathise with honest doubts and perplexities, instead of denouncing them as the outcome of moral depravity or of intellectual perversity. The conference has proved a real way of approach to the Christian faith; many of its members have crossed the road from the institute to the Church, some have joined a Bible class, others have been confirmed. It must, however, be added that a large proportion of regular conference attendants still stand apart from organised religion.

The most important side of work with men has yet to be mentioned: the regular evening visiting by the clergy. Nothing can compensate for the lack of this. It would be far better to close every club in a parish and to reduce the week-day services by one-half than to neglect the visiting of men. The attendance at church and the Bible classes depends upon systematic evening visiting. Only by personal visiting can the hundred and one prejudices against religion be overcome. It is far more important than

the afternoon calls, which are generally regarded as essential. In the evening the man is found at home; if his home is visited only in the afternoons and no attempt is made to see him, he is encouraged to remain with the idea that religion is for women and children and not for men. Far too much time has been spent by the clergy over women, children, and young people, while the men have been neglected. The result is seen in their absence from church. It is not true to say, 'Win the child, and you win the man'; for the child as he outgrows the Sunday-school will probably imitate an indifferent father and drift away from the Church into which he was baptised. But 'Win the man, and you win the whole family,' is the principle which should be followed. The difficulty is, of course, that the time for evening visiting is so short; it will interfere with the evening meal, with services, clubs, and committees. The evening meal at Portsea vicarage is at 6 P.M., so as to allow more time for this visiting, which is regarded as one of the most important duties of the staff. To call from house to house in an evening would be waste of energy, so it is usual to make a list of men who might with profit be seen. There is no visiting more enjoyable and none which is so likely to lead to good results. Where a large number of men are to be found in a congregation it is safe to assume that the clergy find time to visit them. If the Church is really to gain a hold on the men of the country, it must recognise that of far greater importance than occasional services with special sermons, or many smoking concerts or clubs, is the ordinary faithful evening visiting of the clergy.

VII

WOMEN AND GIRLS

By the Rev. O. A. HUNT

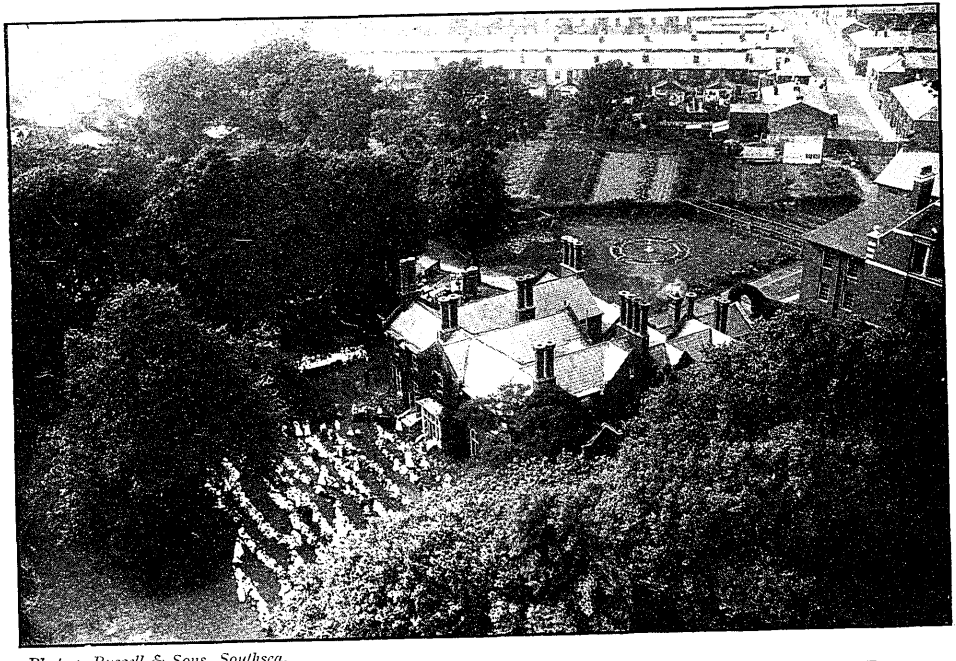

Photo: Russell & Sons, Southsea.

THE VICARAGE AND GARDEN FROM THE CHURCH TOWER ON THE OCCASION OF A SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEA

VII

WOMEN AND GIRLS

By the Rev. O. A. Hunt

A. Work amongst Women

One reason which makes the work amongst women in a naval town like Portsmouth stand out in importance, is the fact that in every street there are many homes from which the men are abroad for two or three years at a time on some foreign station. Letters of gratitude are frequently received from sailors serving in Australia and China and the Mediterranean, who know that the Church is in touch with their homes and teaching their children. This makes a real difference to the way in which they regard a long absence from home.

As a district develops various organisations are found necessary for the shepherding of the women.

1. The first step generally is a *Mothers' Meeting*. The beginning of the work in one new district eighteen years ago was a little gathering of mothers in a small room in the poorest part of the district. In our mothers' meetings, of which there are still three in the parish, what is chiefly attempted is to provide

a place of rest and recreation for women who find it a real refreshment to get away from their worries for a little while every week. No serious work is attempted by the women. They like to get round and listen to a story being read, and generally an address is given at the close. Sometimes they bring their own needlework. This sort of meeting satisfies a real need, especially in the poorer districts—and there are many who would say that this is the happiest hour in the week. Generally, where a mother's meeting is regularly held, the members go into church once a month for a short service, where cards with shortened evensong printed large are given to each woman. Mothers are encouraged to bring their babies both to meeting and service, and everything is done to make it easy for all to come. The thrift club forms an important part of the mothers' meeting. In one district (St. Mary's Mission) £100 was banked in one year. Women are free to take out their money whenever they like. This club is found an admirable way of teaching them to save.

2. But there are obviously many other needs which a mothers' meeting alone cannot satisfy. It is not possible for all those women with whom the Church is trying to keep in touch to attend. Nor would the character of such a meeting be acceptable to a large proportion. There must be some more definite bond of union. And this is exactly provided by the *Mothers' Union*—'A union of wives and mothers in all classes to raise the moral and religious life of the country through the homes'—with its three clear objects: (1) To uphold the sanctity of marriage; (2) To awaken in mothers a sense of their great responsi-

bility as mothers in the training of their boys and girls (the future fathers and mothers of the empire); and (3) To organise in every place a band of mothers who will unite in prayer, and seek by their own example to lead their families in purity and holiness of life.

This union was initiated in Portsea parish about twenty-five years ago, when Mrs. Sumner came down, and the first meetings were held in St. Mary's Mission. There were only a few members at first, but they came from all parts of the parish. The place of meeting was then moved to St. Andrew's Home, where new members were admitted by Mother Emma. The work and influence of the Mothers' Union has been steadily increasing for many years; the membership in the parish is over 500. Four united meetings of the whole parish are held each year, which consist alternatively of a service in church and a meeting in the parish institute, where some outside speaker is asked to give the address. Some of the recent addresses have been 'The Church in Wales,' 'Rescue Work,' 'The Care of the Children,' 'Social Purity.' All arrangements for the working of the union in the parish are planned and carried out by a 'Mothers' Union Council,' with two enrolling associates, a secretary, and two representatives from each group (from the parish church and the missions).

These quarterly meetings are exceedingly well attended, a large proportion of the members being regularly present. Besides these general meetings for the whole parish, each group has occasional meetings of its own members—generally a devotional service. Once a year a corporate communion of all members

in the parish takes place on the Feast of the Annunciation. All the members take in the *Mothers' Union Journal*. When a member leaves the parish, as far as possible arrangements are made for her being commended to the branch in the parish where she goes.

The influence of the Mothers' Union is certainly strong and growing. It must have been largely through the influence of our 500 members that during the parochial mission there were over 1000 women each day at the special afternoon services.

Every year there is a Mothers' Union festival for the whole of Portsmouth deanery, and the sight of 1500 women in the parish church for service, with simple hymns led by organ and cornet, is most inspiring.

There is not the slightest doubt that this union has a great future, and is making its influence felt more and more in the direction of social purity, the welfare of the children, and the devotional life in the homes.

3. Thirdly, there is the *Women's Bible Class*. This is greatly welcomed by the women, and is an exceedingly valuable opportunity for consecutive teaching of Bible and Church History. If the right time is found, and care is taken that the class does not interfere with the claims of their children, and other duties, such as washing day, and their husbands' tea, it is possible to ensure a good attendance throughout a winter course of, perhaps, twenty-five to thirty weeks. In one district they are continued all the year round. They will come regularly, in numbers between eighty and one hundred, for three-quarters of an hour, from 3 to 3.45 P.M., which enables them to be home before

the children return from school. A syllabus of subjects is given them at the commencement. They are recommended to study their own Bibles in the intervals between the classes; and a large proportion of the busiest mothers will never miss, from one end of the session to the other. In some cases those who can spare a little longer at the end of the class are invited to come into the church for intercession—to which about half come. If asked to do so many will bring their own intercessions, especially if paper is provided on which to write them down. This Bible class is certainly a great strength. Out of it are drawn many of the adult candidates for confirmation for the following year, and the fact of its continuance, for instance, during such a time as Lent, increases rather than otherwise the numbers who attend the regular services of the Church.

Amongst the subjects recently chosen for these Bible classes in different districts have been 'The Parables of Our Lord,' 'The Miracles,' 'St. Matthew' or any other of the Gospels, 'St. Paul's Life,' 'Genesis,' 'The Prayer-book,' 'Hymns and their Stories.' It is found good in some cases to take once in each month a general subject, such as the life of a great missionary, or any great character: 'St. Francis of Assisi,' 'Henry Martyn,' 'Elizabeth Fry,' 'John Keble,' &c. Occasionally, possibly at the beginning and the end of the session, it will be possible to darken the room and have a lantern lecture illustrating the course with slides, for instance, 'The History of the Bible,' The History of the Prayer book,' 'Ancient Egypt.' It is found that these general subjects help to make the Bible teaching more vivid.

4. A fourth point of great importance, upon which much of the vigour and expansion of the work amongst women depends, is that opportunities should be constantly sought for giving as many as possible *some chance of sharing in the work themselves*. When once a large number feel that they have some definite work to do for God, and that they are responsible for the attendance at the meetings and increase of membership of the Mothers' Union and Bible class, the work cannot help growing. Of course there are many for whom active work for the Church is out of the question, and the home must always come first. But it is marvellous what busy mothers can sometimes do, and where there is a real will, most can fit in the time to do some visiting or needlework.

The best openings for work, of course, are found in the actual organisation of the Mothers' Union and Bible class. The progress of these depends very largely on the devotion of their secretaries, and the band of women who are prepared on occasions (i.e. before the new Bible class session begins, and sometimes while it goes on) to canvas the district. During the parochial mission a large number of women took districts of twenty-five houses, and visited them in all about six times, showing wonderful patience and courage and good sense and thoroughness, bringing back their district books with notes as to what each household was doing with regard to the Church.

There are other women who are more inclined to do needlework than to visit. For these in most districts a work party exists. Throughout the year they meet generally from 2.30 to 4 P.M. once a week—closing

always with prayer. The material is provided out of the proceeds of a rummage sale, and all the work is sold at a sale of work or a stall at the next bazaar. A work party with an average attendance of twenty-two earned £25 through their stall last year. In a few instances women who cannot attend do the work at home. One who is very much tied by household duties sometimes gets up at 4 A.M. to make her contribution towards the work party.

In some instances where there are few home claims women will be found prepared on certain days to visit chronic sick cases and read to them. A regularly elected 'Women's Committee' has been found a great strength. There are fifteen members. They are elected to serve for three years. Five 'come out' each year, and are qualified, if they like, to stand for re-election. This committee is a convenient one to be called together before any new undertaking, such as an 'annual tea,' a 'bazaar,' or before the commencement of the Bible class. After one meeting has been held, all the responsibility for catering or visiting will rest with them.

The main responsibility for the superintendence of the women's work rests upon those who are sent to us from St. Andrew's Home for Deaconesses, and for students training for missionary work and parish work. The deaconesses superintend the visiting, the mothers' meeting, and the Mothers' Union, and the students take charge of girls' clubs and Bible classes, and take districts. Already, even in the youngest districts, strong links of interest with the mission field are formed through this means. The head deaconess frequently addresses women's Bible classes in different parts of the parish.

B. Work amongst Girls

The work amongst girls centres round the Bible class, the communicants' class, and the club.

1. The *Sunday Bible classes* are divided into senior and junior; the latter from the age of fourteen, when they leave the Sunday-school, and the former over sixteen. During the last three years, since the general adoption of the Sunday kindergarten throughout the parish, a large number have become 'kindergarten helpers' straight out of the Sunday-school. This has meant a slight reduction in the Bible classes, but a large increase in the number of those with whom the Church is in touch just at the age when there is commonly the greatest amount of leakage. In one district, the poorest in the parish, it is found advisable to have the junior girls' Bible class on a week-night, before the club begins, and the attendance is excellent. The number on the books for the girls' Bible classes last year was 381; and to this must be added a large proportion of the 214 Sunday kindergarten teachers.

2. The *Girls' Communicants' Class* meets once a month, generally on Friday evenings. Notices are sent each month to the members. A secretary is appointed to superintend their distribution, which is usually done by the girls themselves. It is found a good plan to appoint one girl out of each year's confirmation candidates to be responsible for the girls of her own year. As in the other communicants' classes, a syllabus of subjects is drawn up for twelve months, and a register is kept of attendance. One of the clergy, or the lady worker in charge, endeavours to visit the absentees from the last class.

Many of the girls in business find it difficult to get home in time to attend; but on the whole the numbers are well maintained. A difficulty often experienced is that the older ones are inclined to drift away from the class as the younger ones come into it. The best of these will always remain; but here, as in the club, they begin to 'feel old' when they see the younger ones coming in, and it is not easy to keep them.

Sometimes, especially at the parish church branches, joint gatherings of a more or less social character are arranged between the members of the girls' and young men's communicants' classes; and debates have taken place on such subjects as 'Hero-worship,' 'That this House is of opinion that class distinction is the greatest hindrance to social progress,' 'That this House is of the opinion that lawless methods are never justifiable.' At one of these debates over 190 were present.

Since the mission a largely increased number of these younger communicants have responded to the advice that their ideal should be to make their communion every Sunday. This is the case especially amongst the large body of kindergarten helpers. But the communicants' class once a month loses none of its usefulness for this reason, and it is invaluable that there should be this quiet time for intercession and instruction at regular intervals. In one district the members provide the altar flowers for the Sunday following the class, and take them to sick people during the ensuing week.

3. There are *Girls' Clubs* in every district. The condition of membership, except in the case of Sunday-school teachers, is attendance at Bible

class, and the strength and healthiness of the tone of club life seem always to depend upon the strength of the communicants' class. One great difficulty everywhere is that of space. Practically it is only possible to allow one evening in the week, simply because of the number of organisations all demanding rooms, and it is only fair that, where there is only one club night, it should be spent almost entirely in recreation, i.e. dancing and games. They are never tired of dancing, and probably after the kind of day's work they are mostly accustomed to, this is natural. The endeavour to introduce lectures or work parties on the regular club nights often ends in failure. There is generally an atmosphere rather of rebellion and protest when, on the one night on which they can call the room their own, they are asked to stop their games and listen to a lecture, however interesting.

So the best plan is simply to entrust the committee, which is duly elected by the other members once a year, to draw up a programme for a period, possibly of six months. Probably it will not be strictly adhered to, but it gives something to go upon. Sometimes competitions take place, and during the winter there will generally be some competition (ruridecanal or diocesan) for which members are preparing, and this will help to fill up some of the club evenings. A typical period of five weeks of the programme of the Parish Church Girls' Club consists of 'Reading Competition,' 'Sharp-practice Debate,' 'Singing,' 'Dramatic Entertainment,' 'Recitation and Cookery Competition.' The programme of another very strong club (St. Boniface) for one month is as follows:

1*st Week.*—Dancing and games; 9 P.M. dancing lesson.
2*nd Week.*—Quiet table-games; 9 P.M. dancing.
3*rd Week.*—'Coffee and bun night.' (Members pay 1*d.* and bring a friend.)
4*th Week.*—Needlework (for girls' stall at bazaar); 9 P.M. games.
5*th Week.*—Local talent evening.

Two of the committee are in charge for each night. In connection with the St. Faith Girls' Club there is a gymnasium, where regular instruction is given; and the girls take part with the boys in the gymnastic display once a year.

Different methods are adopted as to the dividing of the club. In some districts there is a junior club (under sixteen) as well as a senior. In others the difficulty of persuading the girls, when they are old enough, to pass into the seniors has led to the formation of one big club, into which any girl is qualified to pass after leaving Sunday-school. The advantage of this is the natural intermingling of young and old from the outset, and the disadvantage, that it probably means the sacrifice of some of the older ones.

4. One connecting link between the girls' work in the different districts is the *Girls' Friendly Society*. There is at present one central branch of associates, members, and candidates, which meets at the parish institute on Tuesday evenings; and there is an associates' Bible class on Sunday afternoons. The real usefulness of the work is proved by the loyalty and affection which seem to bind the old members together, even after they have been out in service,

and sometimes abroad for years. They are all written to twice a year, and letters come back from them, generally at the great festivals. The greatest care is taken in commending them to the parish to which they go.

The objects of this society are—

(1) To band together in one society women and girls as associates and members, for mutual help, for sympathy, and prayer.

(2) To encourage purity of life, dutifulness to parents, faithfulness to employers, temperance, and thrift.

(3) To provide the privileges of the society for its members wherever they may be, by giving them an introduction from one branch to another.

One task which faces the Church in her work amongst women and girls remains to be spoken of—a task which must be of transcendent importance in the sight of Him who came 'to seek and to save that which was lost'; of the Son of God who was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil—namely, *Preventive and Rescue Work.*

First, it is surely of the greatest importance that plain teaching should be given, whenever opportunity allows, on the question of social and personal purity. Through the adult confirmation classes parents are urged in the strongest way to speak plainly and fearlessly to their children before they go out into the world, where ignorance will often be disastrous. Some lady worker is always asked to address on purity a special meeting of the girls' confirmation class some weeks before the Confirmation.

Secondly, what is being done for the rescue of those who have fallen? A few years ago it was felt so urgent that there should be in the parish some worker specially qualified for this difficult task, that a lady with trained experience of this kind was appointed, who, while doing the regular parochial work in one mission district, would always, also, be able to visit preventive and rescue cases in any part of the parish.

There are in the borough of Portsmouth, under the direction of the Church of England, two small Homes for Rescue and Preventive Work; they are both non-parochial.

(1) The Women's Labour Home (under the management of the Diocesan C.E.T.S. and a local committee) was founded about fifteen years ago by Dr. Lang, and consists of two small houses in one of the streets of this parish. The usual number of its inmates is eight or nine, and during its comparatively short history about 450 have passed through it. A fairly big proportion of these women come from the prison, or are sent by the magistrates. A few have come from St. Thomas' Home at Basingstoke. A few are sent from other parishes. Most of the parishes in the town have at some time sent women there. They do laundry work, and are busy throughout the week. One of the staff of clergy acts as chaplain, and holds a Bible class on each Friday evening, and the women attend the parish church on Sunday mornings and one of the mission churches on Sunday evenings. In practically every case it has been drink or immorality—and in most cases both—which have brought them there.

(2) Secondly, there is 'The Refuge' in Southsea, which is under the directions of a ruridecanal committee, and has done excellent work for many years. This is not intended as a home where, as in the case of the Labour Home, the inmates should stay for many months; but rather as a temporary shelter, while arrangements are being made to send them to more permanent homes in other parts of the country. The home is generally full, and its small resources are admirably used. There is no greater need of the Church in Portsmouth at this time than that this work should be extended, and a new refuge opened with a night worker attached to it.

VIII

CONFIRMATION AND COMMUNICANT CLASSES

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The Portsea Confirmations are naturally large; the average number of candidates is 250, though frequently it has been over 290, and in the year after the Mission reached 360. The candidates are obtained in various ways. The majority have passed through the Sunday-schools and are members of a Bible class; for years they have heard of the importance which the Church attaches to the laying on of hands, and have looked forward to the day when they would be presented to the bishop for this purpose. Others are discovered in the ordinary course of visiting—the clergy always try to ascertain if those they call on have been confirmed; if the answer is in the negative it is noted down and later on the opportunity is taken of inviting attendance at a Confirmation class. At the outset the suggestion is usually treated by adults as quite impossible. No attempt is made to press it unduly, but next year it is mentioned again and then probably discussed more fully as a matter which does, after all, require some consideration: eventually in

many cases the man or woman decides to attend the classes and probably will be presented for Confirmation. A few spontaneously offer themselves as candidates; they have not been known by the clergy, but they have heard some sermon on the subject, or they know friends who have been confirmed, and after long hesitation they come forward; every year there are some of these unexpected candidates. Experience shows how important it is to ask quite plainly those who are visited whether they are confirmed, and if not whether they would attend a class of preparation. On one occasion a clergyman brought himself with much hesitation to ask a middle-aged man, whom he had visited for many years, to attend the classes which were just starting. To his astonishment he received at once the reply, 'Of course I will, I have often wondered why neither you nor any of the other clergy ever asked me before.' At another time an elderly man, who was attending a class with great regularity and earnestness, when asked 'Why were you not confirmed before,' made the answer 'I was afraid to come until I was invited, I thought I might be too old.' On this subject the clergyman must break the ice; often through a mistaken reserve he loses a great opportunity.

Many, however, are the objections raised in answer to the invitation to attend a Confirmation class. Most common of all, perhaps, is the plea, 'I am not good enough'; sometimes it is a mere thoughtless excuse, but often it is due to a profound sense of the greatness of the step in view. Very frequent, too, is the argument of the parent who objects that the child is not old enough and should wait another year; in Portsmouth parents generally hold that their boys

and girls should not be confirmed until they are over sixteen, and unless they have characters of almost superhuman goodness. Terribly common, too, is the objection, 'I can't believe in Confirmation, so and so was confirmed and it hasn't done him any good'; the failures and lapses of the confirmed form a powerful weapon in the hands of the objector. 'I daren't be confirmed with the filthy talk of the workshop sinking into my mind day by day' is a pathetic cry by no means rare. Unexpected difficulties sometimes stand in the way; a young socialist who is a good Christian stoutly refuses to be confirmed on the ground that no blessing can come through the medium of bishops who live in palaces and receive large incomes; a girl is afraid Confirmation means that she will have to give up all amusements; an elderly woman at last reveals that she has been kept back for years through the fear lest the bishop should ask her to recite the catechism in front of the whole congregation, and 'my memory isn't what it used to be.' Reasons and excuses have to be dealt with one by one, but in all cases it is made clear that attendance at the class does not necessarily mean Confirmation. Possible candidates are urged to attend the classes, so that they may find out what Confirmation really is; they are told that they need not make up their minds as to their own Confirmation until the classes are half over, and that they may come to the complete course without being forced into Confirmation. Many therefore attend the classes as inquirers, and will probably postpone their Confirmation until another year; but others who have started quite undecided find their difficulties are quickly removed.

The motives which lead to Confirmation are many. Most of the candidates look upon it as the natural result of the instruction they have received in the Sunday-school and Bible class. Some have been moved by the wishes and examples of their relations; often lads and girls are brought by their friends, the husband by his wife, the young man by the girl to whom he is engaged. Many feel that in their struggle with temptation they require all the grace which God offers them. Others attach comparatively little importance to the Confirmation itself, but have an intense desire to become communicants, and to enter into the full fellowship of the Church.

The age at which candidates should be presented raises a highly controversial problem. There are many who believe that twelve to thirteen is the ideal age, and regard fourteen to seventeen as most unsuitable. A recent writer on a book which deals very suggestively with work among lads advocates 'under twelve or over twenty,' and goes on to say:

'At any rate the worst (age) is undoubtedly the age generally selected by the mass of public opinion as the ideal one—namely, fifteen to sixteen. Indeed, I don't hesitate to say that the selection of that age as the best, shows a complete ignorance of boy nature, a contempt for experience, and a neglect of perfectly well-established facts of physiology and psychology. Everything is against a boy at such an age. He is working a man's hours and very often doing a man's work, with a boy's strength. . . . He is probably growing rapidly, certainly developing, and all the powers of his being are absorbed in bodily growth and development, leaving very little vital

energy over for mental and spiritual processes. . . . To choose the years from fifteen to seventeen as the time for a lad's Confirmation, or as the time, when having been confirmed, he should settle down into a regular and devout communicant, seems to me to be the height of folly.'

Theoretically there is an enormous amount to be said in support of this position, and experience has shown that the younger age has some advantages. But the statement just quoted is far too sweeping; though it may be true here and there, it is not borne out by the experience of hundreds of parishes. It is one of those doctrinaire formulæ which look invincible in the study, but are daily disproved in actual life. All our experience at Portsea is in favour of sixteen and seventeen as the right age, and against twelve and thirteen; it would be easy to quote many other parishes where the same conclusion has been reached. It is freely admitted that the younger age is encouraged by the custom of the Catholic Church, that it is perfectly legal within the Church of England, that it has the advantage of obtaining the candidates from those who are still in the Sunday-school before they have had much chance of drifting away, that the children so confirmed are fortified by the grace of Confirmation and the Holy Communion before the battle of life commences in real earnest, and before the fiercest assaults of the flesh make themselves felt. All these are most weighty considerations which afford justification for those who defend Confirmation at the younger age.

But, on the other side, it can be urged that no proof has ever been advanced to show that the young

confirmees lapse less than those who are older. It is unfortunately true that the proportion of lapsed among the Confirmed is deplorably large, but it seems to be exceptionally so among those who have been confirmed under fourteen. The child of twelve is much less likely to understand the solemnity of Confirmation than the older girl or lad. A curious admission is made by the author quoted above, when quite incidentally he writes: 'It will often happen that a boy, or even several, will fail to turn up on the evening' [of confirmation]. This is a most astonishing statement. Out of the large number of candidates presented at Portsea it is doubtful if there have been altogether three absentees during fifteen years. May not the difference in experience be due to the fact that in the one case children who hardly realise the meaning of the service are presented, in the other case most of the candidates are sixteen or over? The lads and girls of sixteen and seventeen are far more capable of understanding and appreciating the Confirmation teaching than children four or five years younger; it is given to them at the age of decision when difficulties and temptations not present before are troubling them; and it is an invaluable opportunity of strengthening the faith of those who are approaching the verge of manhood and womanhood. The grace of Confirmation comes as a reinforcement of strength to those who are called upon to battle with the temptations which rise with puberty. (This argument is dismissed by the writer quoted above somewhat summarily as 'completely and utterly fatuous and idiotic.') We are not claiming that fourteen or fifteen is the ideal age, our contention is that sixteen and seventeen are more suitable

than twelve and thirteen. At the earlier age the Confirmation teaching may be partially obliterated by the impending physical and psychological change; at the later age the acute crisis of the change is over, and confirmation will assist to mould and strengthen a character which is then alert and ready to receive a lasting impression. At Portsea we aim at the older age; very few are confirmed at fourteen, rather more at fifteen, the majority are sixteen or over. A large number of adults both men and women are annually presented. The Confirmation statistics for three years at Portsea show that in 1912 out of 295 candidates 10 were fourteen years of age, 52 were fifteen, the other 233 were sixteen and over, 90 being adults of twenty-one and upwards; in 1913 there were 244 candidates, 6 were fourteen, 51 were fifteen, the remaining 187 were sixteen and over, of whom 53 were adults; in 1914 out of the 360 candidates, 21 were fourteen, 58 were fifteen, the other 281 were over sixteen and out of these 118 were men and women over twenty-one.

The classes usually commence in the first week of the New Year, though when Easter is exceptionally early a start has to be made in November. The disadvantage of an early start is that it involves a break of a fortnight at Christmas. Classes for adults, for boys, and for girls are held at the parish and the mission churches. With one exception all are in the evening, as the majority of the candidates are at work during the day. Most of the classes are held on the week-nights, but it has been found necessary to have also a class after Evensong on Sunday for the convenience of those who can come at no other time. As far as possible

the classes are held in the church and not in ordinary class rooms; this gives an atmosphere of quiet and reverence.

As a rule there are from fourteen to sixteen classes in the course. The candidates are strongly urged to attend regularly and punctually. Irregularity is regarded as a sign of lack of keenness, and may result in the postponement of the Confirmation. Where regular attendance is impossible on account of work or illness, private instruction is given at the vicarage or at the candidate's home. In most cases the candidates are given a short syllabus, such as will be found at the end of the chapter, which helps them to recall the teaching they have received. The class commences with prayer, and sometimes with meditation and self-examination; as the Confirmation and first Communion draw near more time is given to the devotional side of the class, perhaps ten minutes or more are spent in meditation and prayer. At the conclusion of the class the clergyman who takes it marks the register of names, and shakes hands with the candidates as they leave.

The first class is an introduction to the whole of the course. It consists of an explanation of the meaning of Confirmation and of a reply to the arguments which are used against it. Emphasis is laid on the New Testament references to the laying on of hands, and the candidates follow them in their Bibles. Candidates are told that their preparation must advance on three lines: they must pray daily about their Confirmation—a simple prayer is suggested, such as 'O Lord God, help me to prepare rightly for my Confirmation, for Jesus Christ's sake'; they must discover and fight

against their besetting sin; they must resolve to be regular in their attendance at the classes and to think over in the week the lessons they have received. Probably at the second class there will be some who were not present at the first; it is therefore necessary to spend a little time at the commencement in giving a summary of what has already been taught. In fact all through the classes it is advisable to recapitulate past teaching; the majority of those who attend have had a long and tiring day, and are quite unaccustomed to following lectures, repetition must therefore be freely used. The second class will probably be devoted to the subject of prayer; it is better to give this quite early in the series than at the end, for the preparation of the candidates depends so much upon their prayers, and many have only the vaguest ideas as to their meaning and method. It is very common to find that prayers are said at night only and not in the morning, and often those which are used are quite unsuitable. Frequently middle-aged men and women with families of their own repeat without change or addition the prayers they learnt as children, sometimes only a verse of 'Jesu meek and gentle.' They have had little idea of prayer as the means of communication between children and their Father, or of adapting it to the new and changed conditions of their lives. Prayer is followed by two, or when time allows three, classes on repentance—this is the time for the teaching on self-examination; sometimes the vow of renunciation, sometimes the ten commandments are taken as the basis of this. This section of the course closes with an instruction on the Church's teaching on confession; no attempt is made to urge private

confession in the presence of a priest, but the candidates are told that they must have repentance, that they must know their sins and confess them to God, and if their private self-examination and confession still leave them with a troubled conscience then they should go 'to some discreet and learned minister of God's word,' and from him obtain 'the benefit of absolution.' The liberty and not the advisability of private confession is taught: the candidate is left entirely free to act as his conscience guides him. Five or more classes are next taken on Faith, when the Creed is explained. A class is then taken on Baptism, in preparation for the administration of that Sacrament to some of the candidates, and then a more general class on 'Marks of the New Life.' After the Confirmation three more classes are devoted to instruction on the Holy Communion.

Besides attendance at the classes each candidate has two interviews with the conductor of the class. These interviews are very important, and occupy a considerable time. At them the full name, age, and date and place of Baptism are taken down. Unexpected discoveries are sometimes made in the preliminary conversations, and occasionally it is found that the candidate has already been confirmed. 'Oh I thought I should like to be done again, as I didn't understand before,' was the remark once made by an elderly woman. 'I ought to know all about it, as this will be the third time,' was the opening statement of an old naval pensioner, who went on to explain he had been twice confirmed in the Navy when a boy. On the other hand, cases are discovered where the candidate has been for long under the mistaken

impression that he had been confirmed, through confusing his admission in boyhood to a choir with Confirmation. These cases are, of course, quite rare and exceptional; they only show that careful inquiry should be made in the case of the less intelligent adults so as to be sure they are correct in statements they make about their Baptism or Confirmation. The greater part of these interviews will be occupied in trying to find out how far the classes are being understood, and how far those who attend them are progressing in prayer and self-examination. In all cases prayer and repentance, the meaning of Confirmation, and the importance of the Holy Communion will be discussed with the candidates. No attempt is ever made to press their confidence, but it is most necessary to discover whether they have grasped, and are trying to follow out, the teaching on prayer and self-examination. These interviews afford the chance of dealing more adequately with individuals than is possible in the class. In a class of average intelligence there will be one or two who are certain to have intellectual doubts which it would be profitless to discuss before those who are never likely to experience them, but in the interview they can be thoroughly talked over. The candidate is often glad to ask questions on problems of faith which he has long felt perplexing, or advice over some temptation which assails him, or for guidance in prayer and Bible reading. Sometimes, especially at the earlier interview, the candidate is nervous, and not much headway is made on either side, but usually the shyness is much less on the second occasion; many, however, are glad and willing to talk from the first. In these

interviews it is not only the candidate who is the learner, the priest also gains a far deeper insight into the minds of those among whom he works. At the second interview the candidates are given a little manual of devotion, 'Nearer to God,' which in a very small space contains private prayers, the Order of Confirmation, Preparation for the Holy Communion, and the Office of the Holy Communion, interspersed with special prayers: they are told how to use it, and asked to bring it to their Confirmation and First Communion.

In the course of the interviews it is discovered that some of the candidates are unbaptised. Their Baptism is combined with the united preparation of the candidates. This is one of the most impressive services held in the year. It takes place at 7.30 P.M. on the Monday previous to the Confirmation: the choir and clergy proceed to the font where the catechumens, usually about thirty in number, are waiting: the baptism is administered by affusion, by means of a shell. On rare occasions some candidate asks to be baptised by immersion, and special arrangements are made for this under the organ loft where a temporary bath has been placed. The seats near the font are reserved for those who are about to be confirmed, and who are thus reminded of their own Baptism. At the conclusion of the Baptism the clergy and choir, followed by the newly baptised, go in procession up the centre of the church to the chancel, and all join in saying the Creed. A hymn is then sung during which the choir depart. The vicar then conducts a service of preparation for the Confirmation candidates, who have come from all parts of the parish. An address is given, followed by a hymn to the Holy

Spirit, sung kneeling; then prayer and short self-examination, with intervals of silence.

The Confirmation is held two days later, on the Wednesday evening, the early closing day, when those employed in shops find it easier to have a free evening. The candidates are usually all in their places at least twenty minutes before the service commences. The bishop and the clergy robe in the vicarage and are met by the choir at the great west door of the church. The married couples are confirmed first. As the Confirmation is large the other candidates come up by threes. Few who have been present at these Confirmations will ever forget the great body of candidates stretching over half-way down the nave, following the Bishop's addresses with intent earnestness or joining with wonderful and inspiring enthusiasm in the hymns, while a vast congregation fills the church to its utmost capacity.

After the Confirmation there follow some classes on the Holy Communion, which are also joined by lapsed communicants who are preparing to return at Easter. In the first of these emphasis is laid on the Holy Communion as the service instituted by Christ Himself, and as the great act of worship of the Christian Church. In the second simple teaching is given on the doctrine of the Eucharist. The final class is taken up with practical instructions on preparation for, and reception of, the Holy Communion. The candidates are urged to start with some definite rule as to the frequency of Communion. Often it is thought that it is best to advise them to make, at first, monthly Communion their standard. But surely this teaching is inadequate: the privilege of

weekly communion should be set before the newly confirmed from the very first. To urge weekly communion as an imperative duty would be to exceed the spirit of the Prayer Book; but it is only right to tell the candidates that weekly Communion was the custom of the first Christians, that thousands have found blessing from it, that they also would gain strength and grace in this way, and that they ought not to acquiesce permanently in anything less than weekly Communion. If, at first, any feel it wise to make the fortnightly or monthly rule, they should be told to regard this as only temporary, later they should try to come more frequently. It is easier to impress the ideal of weekly Communion upon those who are newly confirmed than upon those who for many years have become accustomed to regard monthly Communion as their rule. There will, of course, always be some cases where the difficulties in the way of weekly Communions are almost insuperable; but many who were once irregular monthly communicants find now that weekly Communion has become so much a part of their spiritual life that nothing would induce them to abandon it. The candidates are advised to come to the Holy Communion in the freshness of the morning, before food and before the cares of the day have commenced. The First Communion is on Easter Day, when the candidates receive at the different churches in the parish.

Each year's experience in preparing candidates brings home more strongly the belief that fourteen to sixteen weeks' preparation is inadequate, especially with regard to the time which is given to sacramental teaching. A regular system of Communicants' Classes

is intended to supplement this. They exist for three purposes: first, to strengthen the sense of the importance of careful preparation; secondly, to continue the teaching which commenced in the Confirmation classes; thirdly, to keep in touch with the communicants, and to ensure that they are visited regularly. The machinery of an ordinary class is very simple: a register with a roll of members; a printed notice; a secretary who sees that every member has his notice for the next meeting, who marks those who are present, who arranges that frequent absentees are visited or refers their names to the clergyman in charge of the class. Sometimes the secretary is assisted by a committee which takes its share in the visiting. The class holds monthly meetings in the church, usually on the Friday before a stated Sunday. There are classes for adults, both men and women, for young men and lads, for women and girls. The classes have no rules, and no forms of admission; the newly confirmed at once become members of the class appropriate to their age and sex, and regularly receive notices. The following is a typical notice: 'I send this to remind you of the Adults' Communicants' Class which meets at the Church on Friday next at 8.30 P.M. I hope you will be able to come, but even if you are not, I hope you will be able to join us at the Holy Communion on the Sunday following. If you can come to the class will you please bring this notice.' The notices, which have on them the names of the recipients, are collected by the secretary at the class, and help him to mark the register.

The class is always held in the church. The following is the usual order of service, though there

is a good deal of variety permitted. First collects and a hymn; then an address, which is sometimes preceded by answering questions which have been sent in by the members; then self-examination, pauses being made after each question, followed by the confession and a short form of absolution; then a Communion hymn, such as 318 or 255 (A. & M.), is sung, and the class closes with Communion prayers, which include one for absent members. The address is nearly always part of a year's course on such subjects as 'The Doctrine of the Holy Communion,' 'The Prayer Book,' 'The Service of the Holy Communion,' 'The Titles of the Holy Eucharist,' 'Vital Religion.' The self-examination is based on the Ten Commandments; on Sins of Thought, Word, Deed, and of Omission; or on the Beatitudes. Special services of preparation, sometimes taken after Sunday Evensong, are held before the great festivals; for these printed letters are sent by the vicar to all the communicants in which he reminds them of the duty of communicating, makes some suggestions as to their preparation and probably refers to some other matters in connection with the spiritual life of the parish; sometimes the letter is devoted to one special subject, such as 'The Frequency of Communion,' or 'The Duty of Intercession.'

This class system, which has completely superseded the older guilds of the parish, has the advantages of simplicity, of embracing all the newly confirmed, of continuing instruction. It has two dangers, which apply to any kind of monthly preparation: the class may be regarded as a substitute for private preparation, so it has to be made very clear that it is not

intended as such, but is meant to help, not to supersede, the private preparation. Sometimes, too, it encourages the idea that because the class is monthly, the communion is also monthly; to guard against this misconception and to witness to the duty of weekly preparation, a short devotional office is now said in the parish church on Saturday evenings after the ordinary service; few attend it, but prayer is offered that all communicants may prepare rightly and devoutly for the Eucharist on the next morning.

The following is the syllabus used for the Confirmation classes during the last three years: it is not used throughout the parish, as some of the clergy prefer a slightly different arrangement of subjects; all deacons are expected to attend the vicar's classes, so that the same lines of teaching may be as far as possible observed throughout the parish.

SUGGESTIONS TO CANDIDATES.

1. All candidates should pray daily for God's blessing on their Confirmation.
2. Candidates should be regular and punctual in their attendance at the classes.
3. The Catechism need not be learnt by heart, but should be studied carefully.
4. Prayer Books should be brought to the class.
5. All who are confirmed should join one of the monthly communicants' classes.

I.—CONFIRMATION.

What is Confirmation?—(1) God confirms (strengthens) us by the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed by the laying on of hands. (2) We confirm the promises and vows made at our Baptism.

Reasons against Confirmation.—(1) 'I am not good enough': it is meant to make you better. (2) 'It hasn't helped others I know': if this is the case it is because they haven't used it rightly. (3) 'I know I shan't live up to it': it is better to try and fail than not to try at all. (4) 'I don't understand it': the classes will help you.

Reasons for Confirmation.—(1) It is Scriptural (Acts viii. 17 and xix. 6). (2) Because we need all the help God offers us. (3) It admits us to the full membership of the Church.

Who can be Confirmed?—(1) The baptised. (2) Those of a 'competent age.' (3) Those who desire to come nearer to Christ.

Preparation.—(1) By Prayer. (2) By repentance. (3) By faith.

II.—Prayer.

The Nature of Prayer.—A universal instinct. The example of Christ. Prayer is (1) Speaking with God; (2) asking for others (intercession); and (3) for ourselves (petition). The Lord's Prayer is the model of all prayers.

Rules of Prayer.—It must be regular, earnest, and in Christ's Name.

Difficulties and Blessings of Prayer.—Wandering thoughts and prayers apparently unanswered mustn't discourage us. Through prayer we learn to accept God's Will and by His answers He shows us His love.

Private Prayer.—Morning, evening, and ejaculatory. Extempore and written.

Public Prayer.—The Christian must worship God with his fellows, 'not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the custom of some is' (Heb. x. 25). The benefits of regular Church-going for worship and instruction.

Thanksgiving.—We must thank God for the answers received to prayer. In our preparation for Confirmation we should improve our private and public worship.

III.—Repentance.

SIN is deliberate disobedience to God, Who created man to love and serve Him.

The Results of Sin are :—(1) Much of the misery of the world ; (2) the weakening of the will ; (3) separation from God ; (4) eternal death.

Self-examination in the light of the Ten Commandments as interpreted by Christ.

My Duty towards God (Commandments I–IV).—Have I believed in Him, feared Him, loved Him ? Have I worshipped Him ? Have I honoured His Holy Name ? Do I serve Him truly ?

IV.—Repentance.

My Duty towards My Neighbour (Commandments V–X). —Have I loved my father and mother, and ordered myself reverently to all my betters ? Have I hurt nobody in word or deed ? Have I kept my body in temperance and chastity ? Have I been true and just in all my dealings ? Have I kept my tongue from evil speaking ? Have I coveted other men's goods.

Confession.—We must tell God our sins when we have found them out and ask him for pardon (1 John i. 9). If telling our sins secretly to God does not give us peace, then our Prayer Book tells us we may go ' to some discreet and learned minister of God's Word,' and from him obtain ' the benefit of absolution.' (Exhortation in Communion Service.) In our preparation for Confirmation we must face our sins.

V.—Faith.

1.—*God the Father.*

Faith is not the enemy, but the ally of Reason. Christian Faith means a loving and complete trust in a Person.

Faith in Jesus Christ is necessary for forgiveness of the past, and for amendment of life.

The Faith of the Church is found in the Creeds, they are based on the Bible. The Three Creeds.

God's Nature and Character.—Some religions have taught that there are many gods; some that nature is God; some that He is far away; some that He is cruel or unjust. The Jews learnt that there is One God and He is Holy.

The Fatherhood of God was taught by our Lord Jesus.—God's personal care for each of us; He calls us to love Him as sons.

VI.—Faith.

2.—*Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Man's Need.—Sin had separated man from God, Christ came as a Saviour and Revealer.

Christ's Person.—(1) He is Perfect Man; born of a woman; works and lives as Man; dies on the Cross; descends into Hades. (2) He is Perfect God.

Reasons for belief in Christ.—His character, His teaching, His claims, His Resurrection, His influence in the world and on individual souls.

VII.—Faith.

3.—*Christ's Work.*

He reveals True Manhood.—He is our example in humility and courage, in love and strength.

He reveals God.—The character and love of Christ is the character and love of God.

He Atones.—He makes us at one with God. He does this (1) By showing the true nature of sin. (2) By making the appeal of love from the Cross. (3) By the sacrifice of a life obedient unto death. (4) By uniting us to Himself.

Theories of the atonement differ, but the fact of the atonement is always the same, viz. that Christ Jesus saves us.

VIII.—Faith.

4.—*The Holy Spirit and Conversion.*

The Holy Spirit has inspired the Prophets and all good men of old. Christ promised to send to His disciples the Comforter, and on the day of Pentecost He came. He transformed the disciples.

The Work of the Holy Spirit.—The Holy Spirit teaches us of God and brings Christ to us.

Conversion.—The Holy Spirit converts. Conversion = turning. Conversion is sometimes sudden, more often quite gradual. When or how we were converted does not matter, the great question is 'Are we converted?'

IX.—Faith.

5.—*The Holy Spirit and the Church.*

The Holy Spirit dwells within the Church.

The Church is the divine society founded by Christ to carry on His work.

The Work of the Church is :—(1) To witness to Christ. (2) To continue His Work (St. John xx. 21). (3) To preach His Gospel and dispense His Sacraments. (4) To be the great brotherhood of humanity.

The Catholic Church.—Our Lord intended His Church to be One and Catholic (universal), it is now divided. The Church of England is a true branch of the ancient Catholic Church for it has (1) the ministry of Bishops, priests and deacons; (2) the apostolic teaching; (3) the Sacraments.

X.—The Means of Grace.

Baptism admits us into the Church, 'the body of Christ' (Eph. iv. 12).—It is a Sacrament instituted by Christ and regarded as necessary by the Apostles (Acts ii. 38). It is a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness (regeneration = being born again).

Administration of Baptism.—Water—and the right words

alone essential. Infant baptism agreeable to Christ's will (St. Mark x. 14).

Candidates for Baptism are required to renounce evil, to have faith in the promises of God, to obey His Holy Will.

Confirmation is the completion of Baptism. The Order of Confirmation in the Prayer Book.

XI.—Marks of the New Life.

Gladness.—'Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice' (Phil. iv. 4).

Fellowship.—'Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ.'

Prayer.—Public and private.

Bible Reading.—Faith is strengthened by a regular and prayerful use of the Bible.

Fasting.—Not necessarily abstinence from food, but self-denial and self-discipline.

Almsgiving.—'God loveth a cheerful giver.' The Free Will Offering Fund.

Service.—Try to do some work for God.

XII.—Holy Communion.

Instituted by Christ.—The continuance of the Passover. The Master's command 'This do in remembrance of Me' (St. Luke xxii. 19).

The Central Service of the Church.—In the days of the apostles (Acts ii. 42). In the early Church.

The Service of Fellowship.—It is the feast of fellowship. Excommunication at one time was the severest of punishments, now many voluntarily excommunicate themselves. How often should we come to the Holy Communion?

XIII.—The Holy Communion.

The Doctrine of the Real Presence.—Three interpretations of 'This is My Body.'—(1) The Nonconformist: A Memorial. (2) The Roman Catholic: Transubstantiation. (3) The Church of England: The Real Spiritual Presence

of Christ. The Church of England believes Christ is truly and particularly present in His own Service, but makes no attempt to define how.

The Gift.—'The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ.' We are given more than His example; we receive His very life.

The Eucharist.—There should be joy and gladness on our part in coming to this Service, at it we should dedicate ourselves afresh to God.

XIV.—The Holy Communion.

Frequency and Hour of Reception.—The early Church assembled every Sunday for the 'breaking of the Bread'; weekly Communion should be our ideal. The best time for Communion is in the freshness of the morning before food, and before the cares of the day have commenced.

Preparation.—This must be made carefully: it should include self-examination, the resolve to pray at the Holy Communion for certain objects and to return thanks for blessings received. Attend a preparation class and use at home the book 'Nearer to God.'

The Service contains Preparation, Consecration, Communion, Thanksgiving.—Don't be late for the Service, be in Church at least five minutes before it commences, spend the time on your knees. Except in the case of illness, never leave the Church until the Clergy have gone to the Vestry; it is helpful to remain in the Church for a short time after the service so as to thank God for His love.

IX

WORK IN A POOR DISTRICT

By the Rev. F. O. T. HAWKES

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This chapter deals with the work of the Church in the poorest part of the parish. To make matters clear it is as well to get a picture of the quarter in question. It is a compact little district of about 5000 people. It falls roughly into two divisions corresponding to the types of houses—the respectable, and those who do not worry about respectability. The former live in the streets of houses whose rental runs from 6*s*., to 8*s*. and the latter in streets of rentals varying from 4*s*. to 6*s*. The division is not at all accurate, but it is roughly true. And between the two classes there tends to exist a great gulf which is terribly difficult to bridge over. It must not be forgotten that class distinctions are as much in evidence amongst the working classes as amongst the well-to-do. The plant at the disposal of the Church to deal with this district consists of a mission church holding 300 people, and an admirable institute adjoining it which owes its existence to the generosity of Magdalen College, Oxford, which from the year 1896 to the year 1906 regarded this part of the parish as its mission. A couple of

hundred yards away is a second room, capable of holding 150 people, which serves as an infant Sunday-school and junior boys' club ; a corner shop in another direction is used as a crèche ; a discarded public-house in a side street is the head-quarters of a Shoeblacks Brigade ; and in the centre of the district a third shop is known as ' The Hostel,' where the curate-in-charge can interview his flock, write letters, and have meals.

Such is the district ; such are the tools. The problem now is so to use the latter as to bring home to the former the message of the Church.

For years almost consciously three principles have guided the work, which may be summed up in three commands :

(1) Face your job.
(2) Be tender with bruised reeds.
(3) Speak in language which can be understanded by the people.

There is always a tendency for well-to-do people living outside a poor district to attend the clubs and meetings held within it if these happen to be attractive. There is also a great temptation for the Church to take the line of least resistance and minister to those who welcome its ministrations instead of those who do not want them. But if once the Church life gets monopolised by the better-to-do in a poor district the very poor will not come in. It has, therefore, been the policy underlying the work to turn away from the outsiders, and to face the job for which the church in the district exists. It is agreed that it is better to fail in doing one's real job than to be successful in doing some one else's.

Then again, in such a locality the majority of the Church's 'patients' will be 'bruised reeds.' The utmost patience and tenderness has to be used with these. If those were rejected who are not perfect the Church would become a very small body indeed. And so we have deliberately to recognise that we must often be content with even more than usually imperfect efforts at Christianity in our poor locality. We are not in a hurry to cross off from the school register the desperately irregular scholar, to remove from the roll the very irregular communicant, or to meet with the discipline of the Church the temperance convert who occasionally lapses. It is something that they are trying at all.

Lastly, there is that fundamental principle of the Reformation—to talk in a language understanded by the people. The Church's message is the same for all, but it must be given in different 'language' to suit different people. In a very poor district the constant effort must be to convey the message in organisations and by methods which will appeal to the people in it.

The first thing to grasp is that there is a much wider gap between the Church and the people in such a district as is under consideration than in most other places. And the preliminary problem is so to bridge that gap that the message of the Church may be delivered. Of course all the ordinary parochial means will be used—the constant visiting, the Sunday-school and the like—but in addition there must be special means devised.

Now, to commence with, the most useful thing we have found to be the *concert*—and sometimes the *smoking concert*.

It is the autumn. The winter work is all ready to begin. The first steps are a series of concerts.

On the first night it is a concert for the lads. It is advertised in all the streets. It has been known (shades of the C.O.S!) to take the form of a 'Coffee Supper.' The time comes, the doors are opened, and in the hall of the institute an assembly of lads varying in ages from fourteen to twenty takes place. The entertainment lasts for two or three hours. In the middle 'the authorities' speak. They tell the lads of a jolly club which meets three nights a week on the premises; they enlarge on the physical benefits resulting from gymnastics; they picture the delights of the billiards and games room upstairs. And they wind up by inviting all those who care to give their names to the good layman who acts as secretary. Forty or fifty names are given and the first step is accomplished. There is a club in embryo.

Another night it is the turn of the men. The district is visited in the previous week evening after evening by pairs of nervous but resolute laymen. Promises to attend the smoking concert are extracted from large numbers of not always reliable gentlemen in shirt sleeves. On the fateful night our hearts swell with pride if we get a quarter of those who have promised to appear, and we find an audience of 150 men in all kinds of attire. They again are addressed by 'the authorities': the virtues of the club for men, held three nights a week, are expatiated on, and its free and easy character driven home with vigour. The secretary tours in and out the rows and takes as many names as he can—and lo! we have a men's club on the stocks.

The same procedure, though different in detail, is adopted with the girls. As a rule they will not assemble in the same numbers as the boys, and the class distinctions are much more marked amongst them than amongst the boys. It is almost necessary to have two clubs—one for the smooth girls and one for the rough girls. And sometimes the latter can be very rough. We can remember one night the swift chase of the lady worker down the main street by her flock, and just as safety was reached the capture of her black streaming bonnet veil, which was borne back triumphant to the district much as a Red Indian would carry a scalp. But it is through the clubs, whether rough or smooth, the girls can best be reached, and so they receive the same treatment as the lads and men.

The women are dealt rather differently with. They are indeed collected together at the beginning of the winter by a concert or entertainment, but they are at once formed into a class which meets one afternoon in the week, and thus they practically form a Bible class without passing through the intermediate stage of the club.

But we must pursue our story. When the clubs have been formed the first gap has been bridged. Men and boys and girls in a considerable number have been safely 'roped' in by means of the concerts, and in many cases for the first time of their lives are really members of a church organisation.

Now the purpose of the clubs is of a twofold nature.

Firstly: It is to get people who have not been in touch with the church to mingle with church people and the clergy, and to let them see that, whilst just

sinful human beings like themselves, these folk have got something through their religion which gives their lives a bit more purpose than their own.

Secondly : To give the people a place to go to, where they will find an atmosphere in which their religion can begin to grow. We cannot too deeply realise that the conditions of life under which many of the very poor live are such that it is humanly impossible for them to *begin* a religious life. One does see the daily wonder of religion living in the most poisonous atmosphere, but it must be a plant of wondrously strong growth, and it is not normal. The joining of a church club does create an atmosphere for a few hours in the week during which the higher things may begin to exist. And it is extraordinary to those who have been closely associated with club life to find what a tremendous part in the life of its members the club plays.

There are two further points which need to be noticed with regard to the club.

Firstly : It should be clearly understood that men will not be button-holed and talked to about religion in the club. The whole atmosphere will be distinctly 'Church'; Church notices will be displayed in the rooms; the club will be asked to help in Church functions; the committee will have a majority of churchmen on it, but it must be clearly understood that religion will not be obtruded upon the attention of members when they have come to the club for purposes of recreation.

Secondly : In the lads' club it is absolutely essential that the clergy or lay-worker should be constantly present. If this is not the case the evils of gambling

and bad talk may quickly grow up, and the club may do more harm than good. A church worker a little time ago received a rude shock from a lad who said, 'I never learnt to gamble till I came to your church club.' If the lads are not being made better by the club they are certainly being made worse.

But the club is only the first stage of the journey towards the church. The second is the Bible class.

In connection with all the different clubs Bible classes are held. The men's class is held on a week night and attendance at it is absolutely voluntary. The girls' and lads' classes are held on a Sunday and are compulsory. 'Compulsory' sounds a horrid word, but it all depends on the way it is done. It must be done in a paternal not a legal manner. The curate-in-charge calls together his lads for instance and speaks as follows: 'Look here, chaps, when you've joined this club, you joined my family; I'm *pro tem* your father. Now I should insist on my own children, if I had any, learning about religion, and so I must do the same with you. So you must come to class every Sunday at 4 P.M. without fail.' With a little firmness and a good deal of shepherding they come, and many of them for the first time in their lives get some definite religious teaching. It is impossible to exaggerate the crass ignorance of many of the poorer lads. The simple Bible teaching many have received at school has been so simple as to leave them ignorant of the whereabouts of the book Genesis in the Bible, and to a great many the name of Christ connotes nothing.

The men's class needs care. It is talked about very openly at the opening concert, but its voluntary

nature is most clearly emphasized. It is also made clear that the men must not dress up for it, but if they like come in 'their cords.' And they do. The class opens with a hymn—a lecture for half an hour follows on some religious topic. Then pipes are lit and questions are asked for. It is generally found expedient to suborn one or two questioners to lead the way, but after the ice is broken discussion becomes quite brisk, and subjects varying from the identity of Cain's wife to the propriety of the Archbishop's income are quickly and trenchantly dealt with. The whole proceedings last about an hour or an hour and a half, and often more men turn up for the class night than on any other night.

Having got our men, women, lads, and girls to attend their classes there is now another tremendous chasm to be negotiated—that which gapes between the class and the church. To many of them entering the church is like entering a dentist's parlour. There are some little points which make the entry easier. It has been found helpful to reserve half a dozen rows of chairs at the back of the church and label them 'Men only.' Lads and men will often come to church if they know they can slip in at the back and sit amongst members of their own sex. It is both weak and ungallant. But it is human nature in its unconverted form and had better be recognised.

A straight talk to the men in the class about church going and the announcement of the reserved seats will often result in a little batch of men appearing on a Sunday night.

Again, with the boys it has been found that they will often come in a gang whereas they will not come

separately, and so on one Sunday in the month a sort of corporate act of church-going has been arranged and has caused many to begin to come separately afterwards. Or again, the club rooms have been opened for half an hour before service in order that members might assemble and go into church. All these different little plans have been found in their different ways useful, and in conjunction with the personal influence of clergy and lay members have helped many to take the plunge and enter 'The Mission.' This brings us to consider the question of the services which will be best understood by the poor.

The first thing, of course, that must be clear is that the Holy Communion must be the chief service of the Church's worship. And this is taught in the simplest and most evangelical manner. At the east end of the church near the altar is a picture of our Saviour standing with outstretched arms. That is a symbol of the Holy Communion teaching which the people can grasp. Jesus Christ is really present there; Jesus Christ bids all who are weary and heavy laden to come to Him in this service, and find forgiveness and strength. None should hesitate, who can come with penitence and faith, to come Sunday by Sunday to that service. And the people come and sing a simple hymn or two and find in that service the answer to their needs. There is no ritual in the ordinary sense of the word; everything is quite simple.

This touches a point that needs a word. It is often said nowadays that the people living in a poor and dingy district are most helped by what must be called for lack of a better name a 'Ritualistic' service.

St. Agatha's, Landport; St. Alban's, Holborn; St. Peter's, London Docks—the Church of the Brothers Pollock, Birmingham, are quoted as examples. These cases prove nothing, for it is impossible to avoid coming to the conclusion that it was (or is) the absolute devotion of the workers in these parishes which really won people to the church. The constantly expressed objection to and dislike of much, ceremonial heard amongst the people certainly make for the opposite conclusion. Perhaps it would be most true to say that, whilst in some parishes the use of much ceremonial may be excellent and helpful to the poorer classes, it must not be assumed as an axiom that such services are helpful universally. This needs saying, as there is a good deal of nonsense written about the English working-man responding when he is given full 'Catholic' privileges which is as a rule another way of describing services accompanied with much ceremonial. It is not true always. With regard to the other services Matins is not said in the mission church. In the morning efforts are concentrated on the children. The evening service is held at the usual time. After a good deal of experiment the type of service found to be most helpful is a modified form of Evensong. Lessons which are too difficult are altered; Psalms when too long are varied; and extempore prayers are introduced in place of the state prayers. Occasionally the service is more extensively altered; the Psalms are omitted altogether and mission hymns are used throughout. This is called 'Mission' Sunday, and special efforts are made to get outsiders to church that night. The abandonment of the main structure of the church

service would be a sore blow to the regular church people, but the slight alterations described above make it much more suitable for the outcast and stranger.

Apart from the ordinary Sunday Services a Lantern Service in Lent and on Good Friday, the Midnight Service, and the Harvest Festival have been found excellent ways of bringing the message of the Church to the people. Processions through the streets once or twice a year have the effect of reminding people of the Church's existence, if they have not the immediate result of bringing them to church. It is the fashion in some quarters to speak contemptuously of the Harvest Festival and Midnight Service, but if these or any other services can be used as instruments to bring people in touch with the church, they are of real use. Services in stables, at street corners, and on vacant plots of ground have been in turn tried and all in their way have proved helpful.

Our experience as to the best way of helping the folk through the services of the church might be summed up in the formula: clear sacramental teaching in union with a strong evangelical appeal, both associated with a ritual marked by great simplicity but a real reverence.

It is to services of this character that our folk are introduced by means of club and class, and although we make no concealment of the smallness of the percentage of churchgoers in comparison with the population of the district, we can say that the church is really in a way in touch with the life of the people.

In all that has been said previously no mention has been made of Sunday-schools, guilds, and the like,

because they are parts of the machinery of an ordinary district and will have been dealt with elsewhere. There are, however three organisations which are typical of the district under treatment, and therefore deserve separate mention.

Firstly. The Crèche. This consists of a corner shop, inhabited by a matron and used for five days a week as a nursery where mothers who go out to work can leave their babies. The payment is 4*d*. a day, or 1s. 6*d*. a week, for which baby is fed and well looked after. The effects of this for good are twofold. On the one hand, the change effected by the crèche on many of the babies is wonderful. They come in often emaciated bits of humanity and leave some months later amazingly healthy little beings. On the other hand, it has an educative influence on the mothers, teaching them in the most practical way possible to take care of their children—i.e. by giving them an example.

The *second* institution calling for mention is the Shoeblacks Brigade. This was commenced under the guidance of the Archbishop of York when Vicar of Portsea. It consists of a house under the charge of a resident manager. There is sleeping accommodation for a dozen boys. Lads from fourteen to twenty are received into the house, and given bed and board for 1s. a day. They are furnished with regulation coat and cap, and a boot blacking outfit, and sent out on to certain stands in the town. All that they make over and above their keep is their own. If they show any promise at all every effort is made to find work for the lads and give them a good start in life. When it is remembered that the lads come from absolutely

the bottom layer of society, it is not surprising that the failures largely outnumber the successes, but it is worth anything to feel that every now and then a boy is picked up and put upon his feet by the brigade. And it is something at any rate to feel that the Church, as part of ordinary parochial machinery, is showing some of the Lord's love to those whom He certainly would befriend if He were living His Incarnate life amongst us now.

Lastly, there is the work of the Temperance Society. There are two smells prevalent in the district, one of fried fish and the other of stale beer. No one who really cares for the people can work in a really poor district without quickly becoming an enthusiastic temperance worker. All theoretical positions, like 'the sufficiency of our baptismal vows,' are blown to the winds when facing the practical problem, and the most tolerant is apt to turn into a fanatic. It is perfectly true to say that no clergyman will do good temperance work in such a locality unless he is himself a teetotaller.

In carrying on the temperance work the concert is again called into requisition. Once a month a concert is arranged in the club hall. Previously tickets have been freely distributed throughout the district by members of the society. Bills also are placarded round the streets. This latter point is important. Just as people buy a patent medicine because they see it advertised, so people are moved to temperance by continually seeing it advertised. This may be rejected as preposterous, but it is firmly believed in by our temperance workers, and inspires them to continue patiently pasting the district with their notices. In the middle of the concert a temperance speech

lasting a quarter of an hour is inserted, a temperance hymn is sung, and large pasteboard cards with pencils attached are passed round the audience for the names of those who wish to join. At the end of the concert arrangements are made to divide up these names amongst the committee of laymen who manage the society, and they are signed on before the next concert. Every month the committee meets directly before the concert and goes through the roll of members (each one of whom is attached to a member of the committee), and sees that they are keeping up to their obligations. Great efforts are made to get the young men and young women interested in the work of the society, as it is felt that to raise a healthy public opinion amongst the younger generation is the best way of fighting the evil. It is comparatively easy to enlist the sympathy of young fellows of seventeen or eighteen, as the logic of the case commends itself to them, and it is an excellent introduction to Church work.

In conclusion, there is one more thing that should be mentioned. In 'working' a district of this type one should never be depressed if the character of the district as a whole does not seem to improve. This is inevitable. As individuals living in the district are helped to improve in character they tend to move out to better surroundings, and their place is taken by others who have made havoc of their lives. And so the district as a whole shows little tendency to improve. But the consciousness of having helped a few on the upward road can cause the workers to lie down happily to sleep at night. But if this impossibility of changing the character of a district tends to make the

work depressing in a way not experienced in an ordinary locality, there is a compensating advantage to be found in another direction. To one who enters the work with a twinkle in his eye the humorous incidents simply jostle one another in the course of a day. Now it is the lady who, on the sight of an unusually shaped clerical hat, throws up her hands and cries out, 'Well, I'm cracked, look at 'is 'at'; now it is the gentleman we visit who whistles through the back door and casually adds, 'Either the missus or the cat will come.' Again it is the mother who with an emphatic little expletive explains in our own club kitchen she will not have the boy's head smacked, and when reproved for swearing upsets all our fundamentals by saying, 'But —— isn't swearing.' Then there is the man we tried in an unwise moment to eject from the club, but who anchored on to a door handle, until we had to call to the laity for assistance, to whom he confided 'That he wasn't going to be put out by no —— parson.' Nor are the services without their bright moments. Shall we ever forget that pause in the lantern service meant to be so dramatic, but rendered ever memorable by a voice from the back of the hall, 'Well, as for me, I'm going to become a Roaming Catholic'? Indeed they so crowd together that they make us forget the hard side of things, and cause us all to lose our hearts in the work in a way that we do not think is possible in any other place.

X

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

By the Rev. A. L. JONES

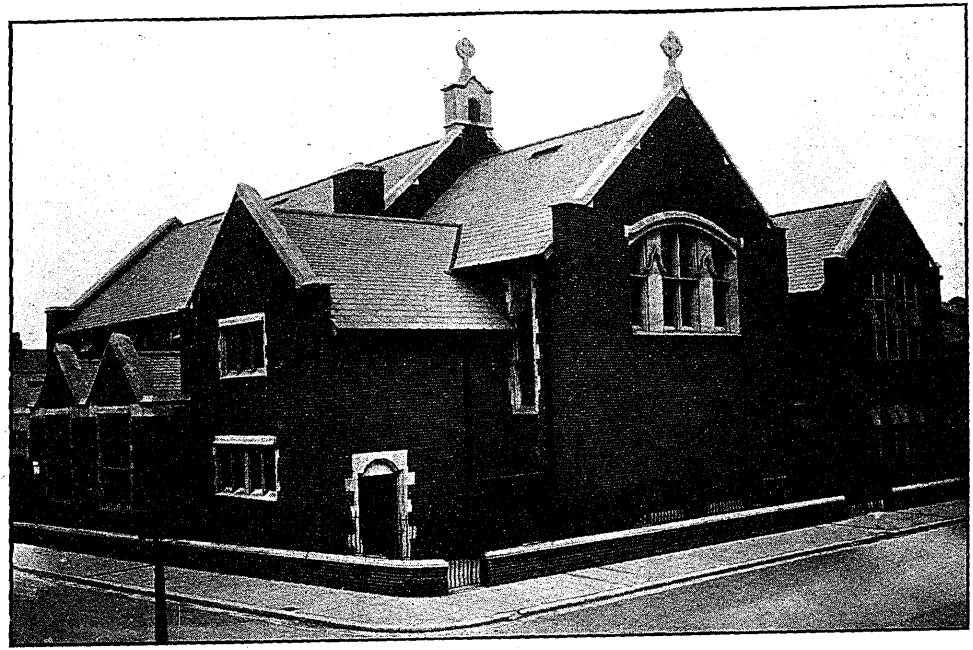

Photo : Russell & Sons, Southsea.

ST. WILFRID'S MISSION CHURCH AND HALL

X

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

By the Rev. A. L. Jones

What are the principles of music in our Christian services?

First of all we desire to give our best. We meet as a congregation—we try to express our moods in song—we may succeed in some degree, but are bound to feel that these unassisted efforts are feeble and incomplete. We desire to offer to God something more worthy of Him. All that we offer to Him we want to be the best—our architecture, our embroidery, our stained glass windows, and no less our music. Hence our costly organs and our carefully trained choirs. These things we strive after that God may be worshipped—i.e. given that which He is worthy of—for worship means 'our best,' and true worship cannot be given in any other way. The attempt at richness and beauty in our music and the care spent in training choirs are efforts after the ideal worship of God. Thus it is that choir and organ work should always be undertaken in the spirit of reverence, with the recognition that the work is holy and intended for the greater glory of God.

But it must be remembered that the choir is not

to worship instead of the people if the first use of a choir is to render *perfect* praise and worship, that through it the congregation may give God the best. Surely, the second purpose is that the people themselves may be helped in the singing. It is a hard thing to give full expression to the emotions without a strong and clear lead. Our choirs and organs stand for this—to give a lead and to encourage the congregation in their efforts. In this work the effort must be to help and not to puzzle the congregation. Elaborate and difficult music must be avoided. And yet the best must be chosen, and while avoiding what is unsuitable for congregational singing, the choir and organ are to lead—the congregation must not be allowed to take charge—and the leaders by their helpful leading will teach and train the congregation to have the best taste in religious music, and will also train them to give their best too.

In addition to setting the congregation an example of offering to God the best music, and leading them in their public acts of praise and worship, the choir has another calling, that of teaching—teaching in the same way as the lessons and sermons are to teach. This work should be achieved through the anthems and settings to the canticles, in some degree when the words are interpreted through the music to the people; but above all in the musical services when the people are gathered to learn, and to hear words, perhaps very familiar, interpreted afresh, and to take home lessons unnoticed before. Music then must be the best (1) because it is to be offered to God, (2) because it is to give a worthy lead to the people, (3) because it is to teach and enlighten those who hear it.

Music at Portsea.—The church is open and the choir is built out into the nave, with no walls rising up behind the singers to throw forward the sound, and the congregations are so large that the sound is deadened; hence it is that we have at the parish church a voluntary choir of over thirty men, forming a solid basis for the singing, while the boys are only twenty-five in number. Comparing this with the balance of voices in a cathedral choir, a casual observer might be surprised at first, but the formation of the church demands this solid basis of men's voices if the singing is to be effective.

The boys are not entirely voluntary, but get pocket-money, which in some cases is turned to good account; for instance, one ex-choir boy saved his choir money and banked it, and so had quite a nest-egg to draw upon when he was at college later on.

There is daily choral evensong at 7.30, at which the Psalms and one hymn are sung. A practice for boys is held each evening before it. Thursday is the day appointed for full choir practice, and on this evening the service is read. The quality of the boys' voices varies very much from year to year, but there is always a choir of considerable ability, and the music of the parish church has a reputation equal to that of a cathedral. This fact is borne out by the large number of people who come from all parts of the town to the musical services held once a quarter.

The choir-master has a difficult problem with the boys, owing to the amount of evening class work that is done, for it becomes almost impossible to secure the regular attendance at, and the amount of time

necessary for, the daily practice needed to secure the highest efficiency.

How are the principles carried out at Portsea?

How does our music fulfil its highest work of assisting us to offer *complete worship*?

There is not much opportunity at our early celebrations, especially at the festivals, when large numbers are present. At these services, in the quiet and stillness, Communion and self-dedication are the more prominent thoughts. Of music we have little or none, at most a hymn or two. At our early Communions it is in the silence that we know God; but at midday, when the strains of Palestrina or some other noble setting fill the church, and the richness of sound rolls round the building in and out the pillars, amidst the helpful influence of sight and sound, hearts beat high and the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving is more complete. As we stand and sing 'Lord enthroned in heavenly splendour,' we feel that our voices in union with full choir and organ are joining in some tremendous act of praise, so vast that we can hardly take it in, with angels and archangels, with all the saints and martyrs, with all our friends in any place on earth—all united in a mystic union. Then we dimly understand the meaning of the Communion of Saints. Our plan then is to have our early services of such a simple and congregational character that all can join in the people's part, while the choral service at midday becomes a continuation of the morning's worship, and since the sacrificial aspect of the service is more emphasised, the music is much more elaborate and much less congregational. The congregation, through their trained representatives, offer the best and join

in silence, lifting up their hearts but not their voices.

The services in use at the church are much the same as at any of our large churches, and names like Schubert, Martin, Stanford, Stainer, Garrett appear with Palestrina and Merbecke.

When the festivals come, matins is sung at 10.15 and the choral communion begins at 11. This plan is also followed on the third Sunday of each month when the choral communion begins at 11.

Leading the Singing.—The second duty, that of leading, is one which demands a strong organ and choir, and an organist who has a will of his own. A congregation of nearly two thousand require a real power to lead them. If they are in the mood they will drag, or in another mood they will take control and run away; but with the power of choir and organ at the parish church it is possible for the organist to lead on or restrain that vast congregation, if he uses his power aright and has the patience to guide them gently and not expect too sudden changes of time or tune.

In order to keep this duty of leading prominent the canticles are not usually sung to special settings. Once a month, on different Sundays, the morning and evening canticles are sung to special settings, and the choir have their chance of offering their best to God and interpreting the familiar words to the people; but on the other Sundays simple chants are used, and all the congregation join in. Hymns and responses too are congregational. But by careful choice of hymns and chants, and a powerful lead, even a congregation of this huge size is brought to care for what is

good, and to join in with heartiness without being slovenly or demanding what is shallow or vulgar.

Teaching and Interpretation.—Every Sunday evening there is an anthem sung; this gives an opportunity to the choir to teach. The people usually sit and listen, as they do for the lessons; but they are asked to stand when the words sung are a prayer, or when they are intended to join silently in offering the singing to God as an act of praise or thanksgiving.

The chief opportunity, however, is at the musical services. These are held once a quarter at the parish church, on a Sunday afternoon, and are quite a feature of the parish. Music lovers abound, and the church is always well filled on these occasions.

The more favourite works done at these services are Bach's 'Passion Music,' Spohr's 'Last Judgment,' Mendelssohn's 'Elijah,' Brahms' 'Requiem,' Elgar's 'Dream of Gerontius,' Dvorak's 'Stabat Mater.'

There is little of the performance about these services, they are intended for instruction. Conductor, choir, and organist all recognise this. The names of the soloists are for the most part unknown to the listeners, and it is the lesson they care about rather than the person who sings.

These services give an opportunity to those who cannot afford to pay for a musical treat to get the best quite free, but those who have means are expected to contribute to the collection as their purse allows.

Special Occasions.—There are certain occasions on which the music has made a lasting impression on the mind. Among these perhaps none more than the singing at the funeral of the late vicar, Bernard Wilson. It all seems quite fresh now, though five

years have gone by, the atmosphere created by that solemn watching through the silent hours of the night, with the dim light shining round the bier and the scent of innumerable flowers. Every heart was beating hard, every nerve was on the strain: with these feelings we met for a service before the body was taken to its quiet resting-place at Rownhams. Solemn and impressive as the whole service was, the moment of climax was the singing of 'Blest are the departed.' Most of us have heard that many times, but this time stands alone and cannot be forgotten. There was a reality of meaning, a pathos in the voices quite unmistakable. A choir, with tears welling to their eyes and hardly restrained sobs, sang those words as they have never done again. And later in the day, when we had walked with bowed heads in solemn silence to the Town Station, the choir stood grouped in the station yard, and the strains of the Nunc Dimittis filled the air, and in a moment there was a hush over the multitude of onlookers, and caps and hats came off until this last farewell was sung.

Ascension day 1914 is another occasion which will stand out clearly. Picture the scene! A group of twenty boys and rather more men stand in the still freshness of the morning air on the church tower. The great 5 A.M. service of thanksgiving is just over, and the strains of 'Praise, my Soul, the King of Heaven,' have hardly died away in the church. The congregation of 800 and many others are rapidly assembling in the churchyard below. There is a little service being held on the tower. The praise of the ascended King is being sung up on that height. The words of the twenty-fourth Psalm can be heard, with its challenge

and answer 'Who is the King of glory? Even the Lord of Hosts, He is the King of glory.' Then with a shout of triumph the Ascension hymn goes up, 'Hail the day that sees Him rise—Alleluia!' Finally the words of the Blessing float down on the breeze—and the ordinary work of the day may begin.

Litanies and Processions.—Times of crisis such as the death of King Edward, the loss of the *Titanic*, times of strike and unrest, as well as Rogationtide, have been marked by the singing of special litanies in procession at the parish church. On these occasions two precentors—usually clerical—are chosen, and a solemn effect is produced, the congregation standing quietly while the procession follows the cross down and up the aisles.

On Fridays in Lent, too, when the Miserere is sung unaccompanied, the choir helps to make the service one which has impressed many who have visited the place.

The Mission Church.—Music at the mission churches in principle is to be contrasted with that at the parish church by its simplicity and congregational nature. A visitor at any of the missions will be struck by the heartiness of the singing and the spirit of keenness shown all round. Yet the services at the missions differ considerably one from another, and indeed they vary at the same mission very notably at the different seasons. A quiet rivalry goes on as to the method and character of singing. St. Barnabas', with its organist and choir-master, indulges in occasional musical services and settings for the canticles, while St. Wilfrid's, with no organ, calls in the aid of violins and cellos to strengthen its smaller instrument.

Here we meet with more mission hymns, and the choir almost wholly confines itself to the work of leading the people's efforts. St. Faith's is always distinctly *the* mission-hymn-book mission; its use is frequent and mission methods abound. St. Mary's Mission and St. Boniface have each in turn had the advantage of careful attention in singing matters, and their choirs have both had quite a reputation for sweetness of singing and musical ability.

The music at the missions must largely depend on the man in charge of the mission, and so we find changes occurring in method and ability. One mission has for some time attempted with considerable success a full choral celebration at 7.45 A.M. on festivals.

During Lent and Advent, or at some specially appointed time, the services take quite a mission character. The Prayer-book then is frankly put aside, and metrical litanies, extemporary prayers, and mission hymn-books, are introduced. Processions in the open air frequently take place in the various districts.

A Procession at a Mission.—At a fixed time the choir and clergy will enter the mission in robes and find a small band of mission folk present—say fifty. Short prayers are said, a hymn announced, and the choir follow the cross-bearer out to the street. There about a dozen torch-bearers line up, and with the congregation in fours and the choir in pairs we proceed through some part of the district.

Leaflets have probably been distributed in the morning to say that the procession will take place, and the route has been indicated.

Halts are made here and there. Under one window

the choir and congregation will group themselves and sing some such hymn as 'O my Saviour lifted,' for the help of some sick case confined to a small room for weeks—maybe for years. At some suitable corner another halt is made, and some layman or clergyman present stands on a chair and speaks for a few moments to a gradually increasing crowd of people, and urges them to follow to the mission for a service.

The procession then moves along the appointed route, singing as it goes hymns suited to the season and the purpose of the campaign.

Times of United Effort.—With all our districts we are one parish, and from time to time we unite. At such times the side chapel at the parish church is arranged as a vestry for the several choirs. The dedication festival in October comes first of these occasions. All the choirs come up to take part in the great musical service, our United Choir service as it is called. The front part of the nave is turned into seats for the mission choirs, and our choir-master stands on a dais to conduct the singing, parts of which have been practised for months beforehand. At the Confirmation service, too, each of the missions is allowed to send up two men to join in the procession which brings the Bishop across from the vicarage to the church. The boys have another opportunity of joining together at the Flower Service on Ascension Day.

XI

FINANCE AND CHURCH COUNCILS

By the Rev. C. F. GARBETT

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By the Rev. C. F. Garbett

The financial burdens of Portsea are heavy: the following is an approximate estimate of the annual expenditure:

	£
Curate Fund	1900
Church Expenses (including printing, etc.) . .	1370
Visiting and Relief of Sick and Poor	380
Sunday Schools	300
	£3950

This does not include sums necessary for special purposes, such as the building of a vestry, the decoration of a mission church, the repair of an organ; nor the expenses of clubs, crèche, shoeblacks' brigade; nor the amounts given by the parish to charities and to home and foreign missions. £3900 to £4000 are required annually for the working expenses of the parish alone. The parish is poor and could not possibly raise the whole of this large sum unaided by grants and outside donations: these together amount

to about £650. Out of the endowment of the parish £600 is usually set aside for the Curate Fund. £2700 is therefore left to be raised by local efforts.

This amount is obtained in three ways. First, by church collections. These vary considerably both in the different churches and at different times of the year. The churchwardens of the parish church look for an average Sunday collection of £15, of which the greater part is normally placed to church expenses. At the mission churches the average scale of the collections is from 25*s*. in the poorer districts, to 45*s*. in the more prosperous. On certain occasions, such as on Easter Day, the Harvest Festival, or Hospital Sunday, the collections are very much larger.

Secondly, by direct giving: a number of annual subscriptions for various objects had always been received by the vicar or one of the curates-in-charge, and this direct giving has been greatly developed by the adoption of the Free Will Offering Scheme. In 1909 Canon Bernard Wilson found the financial burdens of the parish almost intolerable; something had to be done to ease the situation, and it was decided to adopt the Free Will Offering method at the parish church. This proved so successful that the example has been followed by most of the mission districts. The scheme is very simple; all those who contribute are invited to sign their names to a paper and promise to set aside any sum from 1*d*. per week, payable weekly, monthly, or otherwise as the contributor may desire. To each donor is assigned a number and all acknowledgments are made by number, and not by name. A supply of envelopes stamped with his or her number is given to each contributor. A box is

provided at the church door, into which the envelopes are put on Sundays. It is regarded as most important that the various members of a family should be encouraged to give individually, however small the sum may be. The whole object of the scheme is to give practical effect to St. Paul's teaching, 'Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by in store as God has prospered you.' The fund is managed by a board elected by the subscribers, and it votes quarterly or annually grants to the various parochial organisations in accordance with their needs. The scheme has four great advantages: (*a*) it encourages the poor who can afford to give a penny or two a week to become regular subscribers to the work of their Church; (*b*) it places the responsibility of raising the money upon the laity instead of on the clergy, for the board consists of laymen, one of whom takes the chair at its meetings; (*c*) it ensures a regular income, for on a wet Sunday collections may be half what they are ordinarily, and the loss is not made up on the next fine Sunday, but the F.W.O. subscriber whether he goes to church or not on a particular Sunday places his offering in his envelope; (*d*) it encourages secret giving. £300 is raised by this method in the parish church district, and nearly £200 in the mission districts. The success of the fund must depend very largely on the capabilities and keenness of its secretary. The objection often raised to the scheme is that it reduces the Sunday collections; in many cases the opposite is true, and they have increased rather than decreased. In our own instance there has been some slight decrease since the inauguration of this fund, but this is far outweighed by the much larger financial support received from

regular subscribers. There is no method which so brings home to Church people their duty of contributing regularly. Clergy who are working in the colonies are always declaring that the members of the home Church have never learnt to give. 'Oh, we have had a new-comer from England in the congregation this morning!' remarked a churchwarden in Australia, as he discovered a copper in counting the collection. Church people have often become pauperised through their endowments, and when they leave England are quite unprepared for the demand that they should give liberally and regularly to the support of their church.

But the collections and the direct donations are not yet by themselves adequate to meet the financial needs of the parish. So a considerable sum is annually raised by means of bazaars, sales of work, teas, and entertainments. The bazaars are fewer in number than they were once; it is not necessary to repeat here the perfectly just criticisms which are usually directed against them, but it may be permitted to urge two facts in their favour (besides the important one that they are a most effective method of raising money!): their stalls are largely supplied with goods which have been made by people who have given time and trouble where they could not afford money; and they are a good opportunity of bringing together the workers of the district. As far as possible the proceeds of the bazaars are devoted to some special purpose, while the ordinary expenses of the church's work are met by the collections and direct contributions. The tea is another popular way of raising money: tables are given by donors at the cost of

10s. 6*d*., for each table sixteen tickets at 1s. each are sold, and as there may be from twenty to thirty tables the takings are often considerable. An annual fête in the vicarage garden has of recent years been a successful method of raising money. All these methods, whatever criticisms they may be open to in other directions, have the advantage of calling out the help and interest of a large body of laymen and laywomen.

CHURCH COUNCILS

The two subjects of finance and church councils are closely connected. If the laity supply the greater part of the funds for the work of the parish it is right that they should have a real share in its administration. Nowhere is the justice of this demand felt more than in a working-class district; the working men manage their friendly societies, their clubs, and their trade unions, so they quickly come to feel that they have no real membership in a society, whose officers are appointed without their consent, and whose business is too frequently conducted without any reference to their wishes. In the Nonconformist denominations the ministers are often at the mercy of their congregations; in the Church of England the opposite evil is prevalent; the vicar can change the ritual, alter the hour and nature of the services, create new or drop old organisations without consulting the laity who were in the parish before his appointment and will probably remain long after he has moved elsewhere. There can be no real corporate life in a society where the form of government is a benevolent autocracy. The only legal means for the members

to express their views are found in the vestry and through their churchwarden. But the vestry meets only once a year, its powers are confined to the election of a churchwarden, and to deciding whether faculties shall be applied for; it is a most unsuitable organ of church opinion, as any ratepayer, be he Churchman, Nonconformist, or Agnostic, is entitled to attend it and vote. The churchwarden has only limited power; he has control over many of the church collections, but where there is friction his opinions may be counterbalanced by the vicar's nominee. At their best the vestry and churchwardens are quite incapable of giving the great mass of Church people the sense that they have a living share in the work of their parish. Church Councils afford some remedy. They give the people an opportunity of expressing their views and the clergy the chance of conferring with the laity, and they often become valuable means of administration. Their weakness is found in their complete dependence upon the good will of the vicar, who can summon or dissolve them as he likes, and can limit their powers of initiative and discussion. If he is wise he learns how invaluable it is to have councils which he can take into his confidence freely, whose members will criticise in his presence some policy which he is anxious to adopt instead of complaining too late behind his back, and will not hesitate to suggest reforms which they think advisable for the parish. But it is useless to form a council unless the vicar is prepared to listen to the expression of views opposed to his own. A council which exists to consent to all that he may suggest had much better never have been called into being, and discussion is reduced to a mere farce when

criticism is closed by the chairman rising in stately dignity and solemnly pronouncing the Benediction, the one method of closure not yet applied in the House of Commons, but by no means uncommon in parochial assemblies. A real Church Council, elected by the people themselves and not nominated by the vicar, with real power delegated to it by the vicar and churchwardens, will do much to strengthen the life of the parish, and will prepare the way for the day when the Church will at last gain the autonomy which is absolutely vital to its future development.

The Portsea Church Councils were founded during the incumbency of the present Archbishop of York. Since then the rules which govern them have been amended and revised, but in essentials they remain the same. The size of the parish made it necessary to have a council in all the six districts, while each send members to a Parochial Council representative of the whole parish.

The first question to be decided in forming a council is always the difficult one of the franchise. The Portsea rule defining this states: 'All persons of twenty-one years of age shall be entitled to vote, provided that they sign a declaration stating that they are *bona fide* communicants at the church or mission at which they wish to record their votes.' This differs in three respects from the qualifications laid down for a voter for the Ruridecanal Conference by the Representative Church Council:[1] (*a*) these extend

[1] Since the above was written the Representative Church Council has commenced to amend the rules which govern the election of representatives to Diocesan, Ruridecanal and Parochial Councils. Women are now given the right to vote on the same terms as men on the election of Church Councils, and may be elected to membership of parochial councils.

the franchise to all who have the status of a communicant, that is to say they need not be actual communicants provided they have been baptised, confirmed, and are entitled to communicate; (*b*) but limit it by insisting that the voter must be resident in the parish, and (*c*) that women must also be entitled by ownership or occupation to vote at the vestry. The fear of making communion even appear to be a test, and the desire to include in the franchise the confirmed members of the church who are no longer communicants were the two reasons which led the Representative Church Council to reject the communicants' franchise; but to many it is a matter of real regret that the right to vote was not confined to those who by communion show that they continue in the active fellowship of the Church. The limitation of the vote to those who actually live within the parish disenfranchises in a town a large number of communicants, for the church where they worship is often out of their own parish, in which they have little or no interest; in towns at any rate it would have been far more convenient to have allowed the elector, under proper safeguards, to exercise his vote at the council election of the church at which he worships. In our own parish the limitation of the women's vote to those who are ratepayers within its borders would disenfranchise a large number who now vote regularly, and are found amongst our best workers. It was a great opportunity lost when the Church did not for once boldly give the State a lead by granting women the franchise on the same terms as men. It may be in the future necessary to change the basis of our franchise so as to bring it into agreement with

the demands of the Representative Church Council, but this will be done only as a regrettable necessity. Some would like to see the age qualifications reduced from twenty-one to eighteen, and more than once a resolution to this effect has been proposed at the Portsea Councils, but, notwithstanding the support of the clergy, it has been defeated by large majorities.

The Parish Church Council consists of twenty-one members together with the churchwardens, the vicar, the senior curate of the parish, and the clergy of the parish church. The Mission Church Councils consist of twelve elected members and the clergy of the district. Any person is eligible for election who is a qualified elector, but at least two-thirds of the council must consist of men. Some of the councils have their full quota of women workers, but on one of them no woman has ever secured a seat. One-third of the members retire annually in May, and the vacancies are filled by an election which takes place on or before Ascension Day. Nominations are sent in to the secretary of the council in the week previous to the election. Considerable interest is taken in the voting, which is by ballot; no canvassing is allowed in the place of election, but outside it is carried on vigorously; on one occasion the judicious use of a motor-bicycle with a side-car secured the unexpected return of three members! Any member who is absent from three consecutive meetings without due cause is deemed to have vacated his seat, and vacancies which occur through this or any other cause are filled by the council at its next meeting.

The meetings must by rule be held every quarter, in some cases they are held monthly. There is only

one restriction on the subject discussed, no question of doctrine may be debated by the council. All other matters germane to the work of the parish may be brought up either by means of questions or by a resolution of which notice has been given. A change in the hours of service, finance, new organisations, all come before the council. Ritual may be discussed, but no resolution on this would be regarded as binding on the vicar, though he would naturally desire to know the opinions of his parishioners, and would do his best to fall in with their views. A brief account of a parish church council meeting will give some idea of the procedure: After prayers the minutes are read, the churchwardens then present their quarterly report, questions are probably raised by a member about the washing of the surplices, the lighting of some porch, the erection of a notice board, or some kindred subject: then the secretary of the Free Will Offering Fund presents a report to the council: after this the vicar will make a statement about any forthcoming events, inviting the advice or criticism of the council: then follow special motions of which notice has been given, they may deal with the starting of a special fund, or the change in the hour of a service, or some other subject of local interest. The opener of a discussion may speak for ten minutes, but other members are limited to three minutes, except by special leave of the council. As a rule the meeting commences at 8 P.M. and lasts about two hours. In one important direction the mission councils have more power than the parish church council; the churchwardens are legally responsible for the disposal of the collections in the parish church, so the council can only suggest its views

on expenditure ; but at the mission churches the whole of the finances are under the control of the council.

The parochial council has the power to initiate and carry out any scheme which may seem to be in the interest of the parish as a whole : it appoints committees when desirable for the management of any work common to the parish, or for the purpose of advising the vicar or council. No large scheme of building may be undertaken without its approval, and its sanction must be obtained for all the larger parochial enterprises. It has at the present time four sub-committees—the St. Mary's Mission Sunday School Building Committee, the Curate Fund Committee, the Institute Committee (responsible for managing the finance of the Parish Institute), and the Thank-offering Committee (engaged in raising £1000 for the Archbishop's Western Canada Fund).

For over seventeen years these councils have been in existence : they have gained such a strong position in the parish that their abolition is unthinkable ; they have strengthened the hands of the clergy, they have enabled the laity to feel that they have a responsible share in the work of the Church, they have deepened the *esprit de corps*, and quickened the organic life of the parish.

Rules of the Portsea Parish Church Councils

1.—The officers of the Council shall be Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.

2.—The Vicar shall be ex-officio Chairman, and the Curate-in-charge shall be ex-officio Vice-Chairman : the Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected annually by the Council.

3.—The Parish Church Council shall consist of 21 members, together with the Churchwardens (ex officio), the Vicar, the senior Curate of the parish, the Clergy of the Parish Church.

4.—The Mission Church Councils shall number twelve elected members and the Clergy of the Mission. The Vicar's nominee at each of the Missions shall have a seat on the Council.

5.—At least two-thirds of the Council shall consist of men.

6.—Any person is eligible for election who is a qualified elector as provided by Rule 8.

7.—One-third of the elected members shall retire annually in May, and the vacancies so caused shall be filled by an election, which shall take place on or before Ascension Day.

8.—The election shall be by ballot, and all persons of 21 years of age shall be entitled to vote, provided that they sign a declaration stating that they are *bona fide* communicants at the Church or Mission at which they wish to record their votes, and have not previously voted at any other Church or Mission.

9.—No canvassing shall be allowed at the polling place during the hours of election.

10.—Any member absent from three consecutive meetings without due cause shall be deemed to have vacated his seat.

11.—Any vacancies that may occur shall be filled up by the Council by election at their next meeting. The member so co-opted shall serve the remainder of the retiring member's term.

12.—At the first meeting of each Council after the annual election, it shall be the duty of the members to elect representatives to serve on a central Parochial Council.

13.—The meetings of the Parish Church and Mission Councils shall be held quarterly, in the months following the quarter days, that is January, April, July, and October.

14.—Seven members shall form a quorum.

15.—The Council may be summoned by the Vicar or Curate-in-charge at their discretion, or on the request of

one-third of the members. Not less than three days' notice shall be given of any meeting of the Council.

16.—No resolution shall be proposed to the Council unless one week's notice of it, or of the matter out of which it arises, has been given to the Secretary for insertion among the agenda in the notice summoning the meeting, or unless it be deemed urgent by two-thirds of the members present.

17.—Any question may be asked at a meeting of the Council, or any matter not involving a resolution may be brought forward, even if notice thereof has not been given, but the Chairman shall have the right of postponing the consideration of it at his discretion.

18.—No member, except the Chairman, shall be entitled to speak for more than ten minutes in bringing any matter or resolution before the Council, of which notice has been given, or for which special leave has been obtained; or for more than three minutes at a time in the course of discussion, except by special permission of the Council.

19.—No motion shall be permitted on any question of doctrine. The Chairman shall determine all questions affecting the application of this rule.

20.—At a Quarterly meeting of the Council, the Treasurer, or one of the members appointed by him, shall give an account of the finances during the past quarter.

21.—The meetings of the Council, excepting meetings of Committee, shall be open to all duly qualified electors (who shall be from time to time invited to attend), but they shall take no part directly or indirectly in the proceedings.

22.—All meetings of the Council shall open and close with prayer.

23.—Each Council shall be empowered to make its by-laws, provided that they are not in opposition to the foregoing rules.

24.—A record of attendance of members shall be kept by the Secretaries of each Council, and notified at the close of each year.

XII

THE RELIEF OF THE SICK AND POOR

By the Rev. E. G. BUCKNILL

XII

THE RELIEF OF THE SICK AND POOR

By the Rev. E. G. Bucknill

'It seems to me that the work of a parochial relief committee is of the greatest importance. Those who are asked to give alms for the relief of distress have a right to demand that their offerings shall be used to the best advantage for the help of those who help themselves, to make self-supporting those whom temporary misfortunes or sickness have brought low. The best methods and rules require to be studied; investigations into cases in which application is made must be thorough; and relief when bestowed should be adequate. It is most important, too, to endeavour to prevent overlapping and to work in with the Guardians.'

No incumbent in Portsmouth can evade the question of a parochial relief committee, and it is not always easy to agree with those who plead principles or special circumstances in declining to appoint one. Little surprise, at any rate, can have been felt when pressure was brought to bear from above at the end of 1905, some six years after the origin of such a committee in Portsea and three years after the late Canon Bernard

Wilson's enunciation, quoted above, of the lines upon which he worked it. For, in accordance with a resolution passed at the Winchester Diocesan Conference in October of that year, an advisory committee was nominated by the Bishop 'to report to the conference from year to year on matters connected with want, destitution, and unemployment in the Diocese'; and its activities continue to this moment, through the various sub-committees which have since been appointed. Letters were then sent to all incumbents in the diocese, asking for information and inviting suggestions; and in due course, reporting on the returns so obtained, the advisory committee expressed the opinion that 'the value of a relief committee seems to consist (1) in its preventing the clergy from appearing in the guise of relieving officers; (2) in its tendency to bring the laymen's point of view to bear upon the problems of charity; (3) in the fact that it promotes orderly method, and co-operation between all classes and between various agencies; (4) in helping to ensure some continuance of a well-considered policy when a change of incumbents takes place.'

The report in which the opinion appears includes among its appendices some draft rules for a parochial relief committee, which had been in a large degree anticipated at Portsea. The committee was to consist of the vicar himself, the curates in charge of mission districts (then and now five in number), the senior curate attached to the parish church, one lay worker for each district, and such other members as the vicar should nominate in addition to an honorary secretary. Other clergy of the parish and all district visitors should be entitled to attend, but not to vote

at, the meetings. So much for the constitution of the committee.

The moneys at its disposal consist, not only of sick and poor fund offertories and donations, but also of grants and contributions from charitable societies and from the applicants themselves and their relatives or friends. For the committee naturally declines to assume responsibility for management without the entire control of resources, even if it becomes in fact but a channel of payment or an instrument for converting benefits in money into benefits in kind. This principle entails much laborious detail, but is obviously a saving of trouble in the long run, and the best possible safeguard against that overlapping and duplication of assistance with which the charitable are too often and too truly charged.

The committee meets every Thursday at 11.30 A.M. in the parish institute, the vicar or senior curate present in the chair. After a short prayer, the minutes of the previous meeting are read, and grants of relief refused, confirmed, initiated, or continued. Where the application is for convalescent treatment, the secretary is authorised to make the necessary inquiries. Frequently, too, the grant is conditional and its amount left to the discretion of the secretary. When all the cases on the chairman's list are disposed of, discussion is invited upon any which are as yet too difficult or too problematical to be put forward formally.

No application for relief is entertained unless made in writing through the secretary. The form of the 'case-paper' is liable to revision, and is in fact undergoing alteration (in favour of the standard C.O.S. form) at this moment; but its use has never

been questioned, although it is often difficult to be business-like without being brutal. Below the name and address of the applicant, and if possible of his landlord also, appear the names, ages, and occupations of his family; a statement of income, normal and actual; of debts and of outgoings; particulars of employment; names and addresses of references, and of near relations, for it is one of the committee's rules to withhold relief from cases 'in which near relations, able to help, are unwilling to do so.' These are followed overleaf by reasons, suggestions, and a visitor's report. After each consideration by the committee the result is endorsed on the case-paper and entered likewise in the chairman's list.

The advantages of the case-paper are twofold. First, the committee listens to a concise and practical summary read out by the secretary instead of a rambling narrative from the visitor concerned. Second, there are previous information and action to be profited by in cases which are reopened. The *bona fides* of an applicant may thus be tested by what is already known of his family, and in any case the secretary has a record independent of changes in personnel, whether in relief committee, visitors, or clergy.

Besides attending the weekly meeting, the secretary is to be found every morning (except Tuesday) by those who require advice or interim relief; and, if time is indeed a valuable commodity, that advice is almost the costliest help of all!

The relief, then, that the committee claims to supply ranges from what is practically 'poor man's lawyer' at one end of the scale to hard cash at the other. From ignorance, timidity, or stress of affliction, many

let slip the benefits they are entitled to, as of right, from sources quite other than the alms of their fellow-parishioners, whether it be a matter of substantial compensation for injury or an old-age pension, or of milk on the recommendation of the tuberculosis officer. Steadily as the number of new applications increases—last year it was 209; in 1912, 172; in 1911, 113—the committee has yet been relieved to an appreciable extent of responsibilities due to sickness, old age, personal injury, and unemployment, and has had the sending of no adult to a sanatorium since the National Insurance Act came into operation, though the removal of children for change of air and special treatment continues to occupy much of the honorary secretary's correspondence.

In this delicate task of directing applicants to proper sources of redress, the committee has been happy in numbering various experts among its officers and members from time to time—retired officers of the Royal Navy and Marines, retired dockyard officials, a Poor Law guardian, and the secretary of a large friendly society. These gentlemen are invaluable, too, as critics of statements of pay or pension appearing in the case-paper, and cannot be too warmly thanked for their attendance.

Where, however, primary sources are not available and something more palpable than good advice is needed, relief is granted both in money and in kind. Such grants are governed by certain recognised principles, of which the first and foremost is this: that, so long as the State professes to support the destitute out of rates and taxes—and this claim seems likely to increase with legislation—the relieving officer,

the clerk to the education committee, and so forth, must be promptly and pitilessly invoked. Jones, earning good money in the summer months, is home from work with tubercular symptoms. He has eight children; total income, while his unemployment benefit lasts, twenty shillings; many relatives near but none able to assist: the last baby is only a few weeks old, and a lady is sending in milk, up to a certain date. Decision: Eggs to supplement milk pending removal of husband to Langstone Hospital or the infirmary; after removal, leave whole case to guardians—inasmuch as by the time that he is cured, the man's benefit will have expired and the slack time for his trade ensued.

Where sick persons are in receipt of outdoor relief, it is always assumed that the guardians will look after them properly. Where the patient is in receipt of medical relief, as medical attendance, medicine, and the like, from the parish doctor, the relief committee may assist; but in most cases the parish doctor will order the necessary nourishment to be supplied by the guardians.

For chronic sickness the infirmary is the obvious place. The committee is becoming ever more reluctant to incur permanent financial liability in the shape of pensions: where such liabilities do exist, it is because they were undertaken upon some misapprehension of their probable duration.

While fully alive to the dangers of rashness and extravagance, the committee quite realises that if help cannot be adequate it had better be withheld altogether. 'Doles' are only given as part of a plan, which will include, if possible, some provision for their

repayment. In a case, sent by the Tuberculin Dispensary (as it was then called), of a girl of eight requiring convalescent treatment, a vacancy was obtained in a home at 7*s*. 6*d*. a week; but the parents found themselves incapable of more than 5*s*. 6*d*. It was therefore arranged that the weekly difference, together with railway fares and expenses, should be treated as a loan from the parish relief committee. The child left home in October of one year, and was treated for twenty-three weeks; and before September of the next it was reported that all contributions had been repaid.

In another case Mrs. Smith, whose husband was dying in an asylum, was anxious that both her two children should be sent to the Royal Naval and Marine Orphan Home; but one was considerably under age, and even the elder would have to wait some weeks. After serving two situations, obtained through the committee, which proved temporary through no fault of hers, Mrs. Smith obtained a third in the north. The children had been housed with a married aunt for 6*s*. a week, of which the guardians paid 4*s*. for some time. Then the committee found 2*s*. and the mother 4*s*. till she left Portsmouth, whereupon the committee became responsible for the whole 6*s*. till the mother should receive her first month's wages. From that date again the committee found 2*s*. a week, as before, and Mrs. Smith remitted her share month by month to the committee, who paid over the 6*s*. weekly till the elder child entered the home. By this time it seemed reasonable that Mrs. Smith should send the 3*s*. for her younger child direct to the aunt, an arrangement which continues, as well as the repayment

of the committee's original contributions. For, while insisting on entire control, as against the applicant, while the crisis lasts, the committee always keeps in view the restoration of independence and self-respect. Hence it includes among its minor principles, not to help those who are unemployed without the excuse of sickness and can produce 'neither prospect of work nor evidence of thrift,' nor those who 'are without the necessaries of life and have no prospects of obtaining them,' nor those whose 'character has been undermined by drink, imposture, &c.' It may be mentioned here that a strong safeguard against imposture is the medical certificate, which is handed by the secretary to the applicant, then by the applicant to the hospital or dispensary doctor, who fills it in and returns it signed to the secretary direct.

Where the family of an applicant cannot help, adequate relief is often 'organised' by co-operation, either with a person of private means who has happened to take an interest in him, or with some other society, notably the Charity Organisation Society, which arrived in Portsmouth some ten years ago. With this society indeed there is now an amicable understanding, that, within the Portsea parish district, they shall deal only with old cases of their own (with a few special exceptions) and refer all others at once to the relief committee.

This co-operation may take the form either of raising a periodical sum sufficient to maintain, say, a tuberculous or anæmic patient at the seaside, or of guaranteeing a certain proportion of the Surgical Aid Society's tickets required for an appliance or operation. Circumstances combine with the committee's dislike

of permanent pecuniary liabilities to vary these expedients, and even the amount of its contribution to the same scheme. But although policy and finance are liable to review once a week, the ideals of adequacy and consistency are honoured in face of constant discouragement and delay, and perseverance is often rewarded—if only by the thought of what might have happened if no relief had been attempted.

Here is a case, where the comfort is not so cold. Robinson has been invalided out of the R.N. with the rating of a first class petty officer. He is invited to call at the parish institute, where the secretary is most favourably impressed. She visits his wife the same afternoon. She calls also on the landlord and other references. Mrs. Robinson is given work at the Sailors' Rest, which proves too heavy for her. Meanwhile her husband has been looking round for a light canvassing job. The weekly pension does not even pay the rent and Prudential Society. The secretary obtains £1 from the Incorporated Soldiers' and Sailors' Help Society, and £2 from the Royal Navy Barracks canteen fund. In a month's time, other openings having failed, Robinson enters the Navy Motor School and, passing his examination, obtains a good private situation through their agency. Here again the poor man's health intervenes, and another terrible period follows, in which relief from Portsea is supplemented by help from the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association and the Tuberculin Care Committee. Robinson is now working at his former trade in Government employ, with the certificate of the Motor School, for motor-van work

if not private service, behind him, should even that fail.

Another point is brought out by this and a previous example—the frequent reliance of the Tuberculosis Dispensary Care Committee upon the Portsea Parish Relief Committee for co-operation, sometimes only for visiting within the limits of the parish. In this connection it is noteworthy that the expert honorary secretary of the relief committee is also a member of the care committee and *vice versâ*, while both ladies are on the committee of the Charity Organisation Society, the present honorary secretary of which was formerly honorary secretary to the relief committee. The honorary secretary of the relief committee has been elected to the committee of the Surgical Aid Society, and sits *ex officio* upon that of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association; and much is expected from the recent election of one of the clergy to the Portsmouth Board of Guardians.

Although there is no inter-denominational committee at Portsea, yet occasional co-operation has been effected both with the (Roman Catholic) Society of St. Vincent de Paul and with Baptist and Wesleyan congregations. Neither is relief restricted to households of the Church of England, nor even to residents within the parish boundaries, so long as there is some connexion with the parish. On the other hand, the utmost assiduity of religious attendance does not, as has been said, preclude investigation. It is no use directing a destitute inquirer to Portsea Parish Institute with such words as 'You get grocery tickets if you go to the Bible class'!

The ticket system, except as to hospital and

surgical aid, is discountenanced if not obsolete in Portsea Parish. By the 'relief in kind,' which appears in the Relief Committee's Annual Balance Sheet, is meant milk and eggs only, ordered on its authority by special arrangement with a Dairy Company.

Another wholesome prejudice of the committee is against the payment of an applicant's past debts for him. But even this will be done to save the situation, as where an insured person is seriously ill, but can draw nothing because his card is in arrears: in one case of this kind, the arrears already due plus the two weeks necessary to qualify for sick benefit were found by the committee (in co-operation) and repaid by instalments when the State benefit became payable, while a letter was obtained (by the co-operating agency) for convalescent treatment as well.

In one of the mission districts there is said to dwell a family of five boys: each belongs to a different Sunday-school, and all five go to each treat. Parallel experiences are becoming rarer and rarer in the annals of the Parish Church Relief Committee. Overlapping and leakage are still perceptible in its working, and there have been changes, both of constitution and of procedure, since its inception. But none of the anomalies that still exist, or from time to time occur, are essential, and the pursuit of the ideal enjoys, as has been pointed out at the first, the sanction of the best authority, whether inside the parish or above it, pending the day, if it ever dawns, when national and municipal agencies shall have rendered voluntary effort unnecessary.

PORTSEA PARISH CHURCH RELIEF COMMITTEE

Rules

1.—The Committee has been formed to administer such Parochial Funds as may be available for the relief of the Sick and Poor.

2.—The Committee shall consist of the Officers, one Curate from each Mission District and one from those attached to the Parish Church, the two Churchwardens, one Lay Representative from the Parish Church Congregation and one from each of the Mission Districts, to be elected annually by the respective Councils.

[It is not necessary that this representative should be a member of the Council which elects him or her.]

3.—Six additional members to be appointed by the Vicar.

4.—The Officers of the Committee shall be:

Chairman: THE VICAR.

Vice-Chairman .. To be appointed by the Vicar.
Honorary Secretary } It is desirable that these officers
Honorary Treasurer } should be Laymen.

5.—The Members of the Committee shall hold office for one year, and shall be eligible for re-election or re-appointment. Any member, failing to make at least three attendances in the three months, shall resign his seat on the Committee, and the vacancy thus created be filled up by the nomination of the Chairman.

6.—The Clergy of the Parish and District Visitors not on the Committee are invited to attend the Meetings, and it is expected that those having cases under consideration will do so. They will not, however, be entitled to vote.

7.—The Committee shall meet weekly for the consideration of cases, and all decisions of the Committee shall be recorded by the Chairman in a book provided for that purpose. All applications shall be presented to the

Committee at their weekly meetings by the Hon. Secretary, after a preliminary interview with the applicant, and such verification of the statements made as shall then be deemed necessary.

8.—The decisions of the Committee and any additional information obtained shall be entered upon the case papers from week to week until the application is finally marked off.

9.—Whenever fresh information required is not forthcoming within a reasonable time, the fact should be reported to the Committee.

10.—In cases where grants have been made to cover a considerable period, they should be brought up for review at least once every three months.

11.—The Honorary Treasurer shall:

As early as possible in the months of January, April, July, and October, lay before the Committee a report showing the amounts received for and expended on every case that has been assisted by the Committee, during the preceding three months.

Present annually a duly audited account of receipt and expenditure.

Rules for the guidance of District Visitors and those forwarding applications for Relief

1.—Application for relief on the authorised 'case-paper' shall be submitted to the Committee through the Hon. Secretary, who will attend at the Institute on a certain day each week prior to the meeting of the Committee, in order

(*a*) To see any visitors wishing for advice on question of relief not necessarily connected with applications to the Committee.

(*b*) To interview all applicants for relief and advise generally on the cases brought forward.

2.—The case-papers should contain the fullest particulars obtainable.

3.—The Committee will be prepared to consider the application of all persons resident in the parish, irrespective of the applicant's creed or denomination. But no application for relief can be entertained unless the applicant is actually resident in the parish or has a claim through connection with some parochial organisation.

4.—No application for relief will be entertained unless made in writing through the Secretary, and where further information may, from time to time as the case proceeds, become available, it should be given to the Secretary in writing for entry on the case-paper.

5.—Relief will not be granted:

(*a*) To supplement out-door relief other than medical.
(*b*) To pay back rent, debts, or funeral expenses.
(*c*) In ordinary out of work cases, in which there is neither prospect of work, nor evidence of thrift, and in which there is no illness.
(*d*) In cases in which the applicants are without the necessaries of life, and have no prospects of obtaining them. Such applicants should be referred by the Visitor to the Relieving Officer.
(*e*) In cases of chronic sickness, unless they are suitable for a permanent allowance on the ground of good character, thrift, provision for the future, and readiness of relations to assist.
(*f*) In cases in which near relations, able to help, are unwilling to do so.
(*g*) In cases in which the character has been undermined by drink, imposture, etc.

6.—Applicants, deemed unsuitable, should be left to apply for relief under the Poor Law.

7.—When the need is urgent interim relief may be given pending the meeting of the Committee, by the Visitor acting in consultation with the Hon. Secretary. In cases where this is done, the facts shall be reported at the next meeting of the committee in order that the grant may be confirmed.

8.—Visitors are earnestly requested on no account to

assist cases out of their own pockets or from privately organised sources. If a visitor wishes to help personally, the money should be paid in to the Hon. Treasurer and be administered by the committee.

9.—Visitors are urged to recommend all eligible persons, especially the young, to join some Lodge or Court of a permanent Friendly Society. They should also, in suitable cases, recommend the use of the Post Office or other well managed Savings Bank.

XIII

THE PARISH AND THE MISSION FIELD

By the Rev. H. P. THOMPSON

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THE PARISH AND THE MISSION FIELD

By the Rev. H. P. Thompson

No parish can be in a healthy condition where missionary work is neglected. If the Gospel has got a firm hold, it must produce a desire to extend its blessings to those who most need it at home and abroad. Our parish, under the leadership of a succession of missionary-hearted vicars, has always tried to take its part in the forward movements of the Church. Nearest to hand are the large diocesan claims of Portsmouth Church Extension, the Bishop of Winchester's Fund, Diocesan Rescue work, and the like. Other home missions, such as the A.C.S., Missions to Jews, and the funds for training candidates for ordination, claim support no less. In the area of foreign missions we have never supported any one society to the exclusion of others, but collect and forward contributions to any society. The S.P.G., however, gains the largest measure of support among us; the Melanesian Mission has special claims, and stands next; and the C.M.S. and six or eight other societies and associations receive contributions each year from the parish. This is natural and desirable, for many

workers have gone out to the mission field from the parish, and their friends like to do what they can to support them by giving as well as by prayer. Several special connexions are steadily maintained by Sunday-schools or other organisations.

For many years the parish has had its Missionary Association, which exists to organise and stimulate the efforts of the parish for both home and foreign work. The qualification for membership was from the first simply the promise to pray for missions daily, and at all celebrations of Holy Communion. This promise still remains the fundamental condition of membership, but there is now also a small annual subscription of 3*d*., and members understand that they are expected to study and to give, as well as to pray. It is suggested that they should take a collecting box, or give an annual missionary subscription; that they should attend the monthly meetings, and take in a missionary magazine; that they should use the Quarterly Intercession Paper as a guide in prayer. They are given a little Manual of Intercession, which is a token of membership. This manual bears on its front page the member's name, and date of joining, countersigned by the honorary secretary of the association. There follow the rules of the association, a Form of Prayer used at the opening of the monthly meetings, and a selection of prayers for different missionary objects; at the end come a list of suggestions for daily intercession, and a list of those who have gone out from the parish to work in the mission field. A blank page following leaves room for bringing this list up to date.

Every month except August a missionary meeting

is held, on the evening of the second Monday. Notices are sent round to each member, and are sometimes given out more widely to Sunday evening congregations. For each meeting a speaker is secured, generally from one of the societies; the year's programme is made as widely inclusive as possible. The January meeting is, however, taken for the transaction of annual business, a report is read on the year's work, the balance sheet is produced, and the committee is elected. After the business perhaps a missionary play is presented, or some special speaker gives an address. The July meeting is a garden one, weather permitting. There is also a specially important meeting during the Dedication Festival each October.

The management of the association is in the hands of the committee, consisting of one of the clergy, who is secretary and treasurer, and two members elected from each district of the parish. Upon these committee members falls the heavy work of organising operations in their own part of the parish. With the aid of distributors they send out each month magazines and notices of meeting, and each quarter the Quarterly Intercession Paper, to those who order them. They have to collect payment for these, and the annual subscriptions. They issue collecting boxes, and twice a year send round to open them. They keep the list of members in their district. All this means a great deal of hard work and of heavy responsibility; the committee and their helpers are certainly doing their share in bearing the burden of the Church's work abroad.

Through the monthly meetings and through the magazines the parish is kept instructed in the work that is being done in many parts of the globe. For

those who want to go deeper into the study of missions, study circles have been held from time to time in many parts of the parish, and have generally been found very interesting and efficient. The clergy usually stand out of these; their presence is believed to act as a damper upon discussion; they are credited with the habit of laying down the law, and the laity sit tongue-tied before their omniscience. Be this as it may, a lay leader generally proves quite as efficient as any cleric could be, and can give a less divided attention to the organisation of the circle, the preparation of assignments, and all the minor details that make for success.

A small lending library of missionary books has been formed, and these prove of value both to study circles and to independent enthusiasts. The books are kept at the vicarage, and members who desire to read them apply there, and are allowed to take a volume and keep it for two or three weeks. It is intended to add to this library out of the association's funds, so far as they can afford it.

No regular meetings for intercession are arranged by the missionary association, except when twice a year the monthly meeting is preceded by a devotional meeting. These two occasions are in Lent and at the Dedication Festival in October. But there are regular services of intercession each week in most of the churches, and in these missionary prayers are included. On the Friday following each missionary meeting the intercession service at the parish church is devoted specially to the needs of missions. Besides this, ever since the Portsmouth Missionary Exhibition, the special collects authorised for use in the Province of Canterbury

have been in regular use at Celebrations and at Matins and Evensong.

There has been in recent years a steady development in the missionary interest of the parish, owing to a succession of important undertakings. In the autumn of 1910 Bishop A. M. Knight, speaking at the Dedication Festival, told of a canvass of churchpeople conducted in Burma, and suggested that a similar undertaking might be tried with good effect in English parishes. The missionary association at the time was felt to be somewhat weak, and this suggestion came at the right moment. It was decided to canvass all communicants of the parish, with an appeal that they should do more for the missionary work of the Church. The members of the association, when applied to, volunteered to carry out the canvassing. Preparations were made at the end of the year, and in January 1911 the appeal was sent out to all communicants. The canvassers called at each house and left the appeal; if possible they saw and spoke to each of those to whom they brought it. A few days later they called again to receive the reply of the communicants.

Requests have been made from time to time for copies of the form of appeal, for the guidance of similar undertakings in other parishes. It may therefore be worth while to reproduce it here in full, although as it was drawn up in 1911 it is in some particulars quite out of date. The appeal itself was printed on two pages, the third page was to be filled in with the answer, and then torn off and returned.

The results of the canvass were tabulated as they came in, and it became quite difficult to meet all the demands made with promptitude. About 2300 appeals

had been sent out. To these some 750 answers were received; 450 magazines were asked for; 240 Quarterly Intercession Papers; and 160 collecting boxes. One hundred and eighty new members joined the association; and subscriptions and donations, given or promised, amounted to over £23. It might have been wiser (and in some parishes would certainly be so) to make no appeal for donations, but rather to emphasise the duty of regular giving by boxes or annual subscriptions. The direct appeal for money was not meant to be pressed, as the need for study and prayer was felt to be the primary one. A good many replies were received, beyond those already enumerated, asking for notices of meetings and promising prayer for missions.

It was feared that the results of the canvass might be only transitory, but this has not been the case. The number of magazines, of Quarterly Intercession Papers, and of boxes has not unduly diminished in the years that have followed, and the meetings have been very much better attended than before the canvass took place.

That this has been so is partly due to the other efforts which have followed. In September of the same year a missionary mission was held in Portsmouth. The mission was conducted all through the diocese of Winchester, but in Portsmouth we had the special privilege of receiving the Oxford University Missionary Campaigners. These, a band of some forty undergraduates and junior dons, came for a period of eight days, including two Sundays, to give their message wherever it would be received. Every sort of opening was arranged for them, on Sundays and

weekdays, from sermons and after-meetings in church to bands of hope, Bible classes, and mother's meetings. Nearly all the parishes in Portsmouth and Gosport were included in the campaign, which culminated in a great meeting at the town hall on the final Saturday night. The campaigners' purpose was to bring the layman's message to laymen, of the urgency of the missionary duty of the Church, at the present period of world history. It made its deepest impression through this fact. The congregations felt that if these young men were so keen as to come and speak the faith that was in them, there must be a real urgency behind their convictions. When the clergy preach foreign missions, there are some who dismiss it with ' It's their business to do it ' ; but no one could resist the cogency of the fact that forty young Oxford men had felt compelled to come and sound the missionary call to arms amid a town of strangers.

A year later, and a third important undertaking was upon us. This time it was a great S.P.G. missionary exhibition at the town hall. Since the spring it had been in preparation. Many parishes were engaged upon it, and our own took its share. We had promised first to staff the China court, to provide a number of stewards for the refreshments department, and to present Chinese missionary tableaux. Then the C.E.M.S. of the parish met an emergency, and undertook the Canada court. Study circles were formed for the court stewards, upon China and Canada, and for the general stewards also. Curios were sought for and borrowed; and Portsmouth proved to be full of interesting objects, brought by service men from all parts of the world. The

tableaux were rehearsed, dresses and properties prepared. Interest was stirred up far and wide. At last the opening of the exhibition came, and the beginning of a week of strenuous and delightful work. Day by day the exhibition grew more crowded, and the atmosphere of enthusiasm greater. Stewards, who had wondered how they would ever remember about all the curios in their court, or dare to explain them to inquisitive visitors, found themselves bursting with information, and infected with zeal all who came within their reach. Many who came to the exhibition as disbelievers in missions saw the vision, and heard 'the call of the world.' No one who had the privilege to be there will forget the packed hall on the last night, and the inspiration and resolve fired by the closing address from the platform.

So the exhibition passed, and left a deep impression on all who had seen it or taken part in it. Good as a missionary mission may be, it cannot be compared with an exhibition as a means for rousing enthusiasm. The reason is not far to seek. In a mission the work is mainly done by outsiders; there is little call for study or preparation on the part of the parish itself. In an exhibition a vast amount of preliminary work is demanded of those on the spot; they are compelled to study and to labour for weeks and months in advance; and so there is formed, at the outset, a body of the best church-workers, who cannot help growing ever keener as they progress with their work, and draw near to the days when it will be put to the test. It is because it demands so much more, that the exhibition is so much more effective; and though it is the more burdensome to undertake, the burden is one which

it becomes a joy to bear, and the results repay a hundredfold any labour that may have been demanded.

The exhibition left behind it a determination to engage in some large undertaking for the help of mission work abroad. For a year, however, the coming of the parochial mission prevented any scheme from being developed. But the present year has provided the opportunity and the occasion for a special effort and appeal. In October 1914 the great parish church will have been dedicated for twenty-five years, and as a thank-offering for the blessings given to the parish during these years we are trying to raise £1000 for the Archbishops' Western Canada Fund. Other designs have been laid aside for six months in all parts of the parish, and all the usual means of raising money for local needs—bazaars, fêtes, sales of work, boxes—have been drawn upon for the parochial thank-offering. Communicants have been canvassed, and asked to give subscriptions, or take boxes or collecting cards, for the Canada Fund. Each part of the parish has set itself a definite sum to raise, and it is hoped that on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the dedication of the church it may be possible to hand over a large sum to aid the growth of the Church among our brothers across the seas.

This will link the parish very closely with a part of the mission field with which it already has many ties. The Rev. W. G. Boyd, head of the Edmonton mission, worked at one time in the parish; and there are five others who have gone out from here to Western Canada, of whom three were young men of the working class, who gave up their work here, and went at their

own expense to undertake lay work for the Church in the prairie dioceses. There are others like them who would be glad and fit to go, if openings could be found and sufficient support provided for them. Two more are preparing for ordination in missionary colleges, and help is given from the parish for one of them. Several more, without leaving their present work, are studying Greek with the clergy, in the hope that a door to ordination may be opened later on. There is plenty of material, if the proper means could be provided for utilising it.

Besides Canada, many other parts of the mission field have great claims upon the parish. Melanesia stands first, perhaps, for Bishop Cecil Wilson worked for long, and will be long remembered, in the St. Faith's district; Archdeacon Uthwatt went out from the parish straight to the islands, and a lady worker from St. Andrew's Home has recently followed his example.

St. Andrew's Home, the diocesan training home for deaconesses, supplies a number of workers in the parish, and many of these eventually go abroad, especially to Ahmednagar in the Bombay diocese. Through them, and a former curate now in Cawnpore, we are linked with India. Four former curates were until recently working in the Brisbane diocese, and two more will soon be in Waiapu, New Zealand. There are close links, too, with North China and Shantung, South Africa, and Madagascar. Others will follow year by year, and with the tide of missionary interest rising, as it is, throughout the country, it may confidently be hoped that the missionary work of the Church will become an ever-increasing part of the activities of this and every parish.

XIV

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THE PARISH

By the Rev. W. M. PRYKE

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'Nothing is secular except what is sinful' is the oft quoted dictum of Archbishop Benson—a wise saying which makes against the unnatural separation of sacred and profane, and the drawing of a hard and fast line between what is, and what is not, the province of religion and of the Christian Church.

Too often a man's life is arbitrarily divided both by himself and by others into two watertight compartments labelled respectively Sunday and weekday, religious and daily life; the latter is filled with all the varied interests and responsibilities, whether of business or recreation, which make up the six working days of the ordinary week; while to the former is consigned what we are pleased to call the man's religion, which as often as not may be a mere matter of church attendance from indifferent motives, or of unreasoning abstinence from occupations in themselves innocent enough, because the desire to be thought respectable forbids their indulgence.

A crushing indictment of irreligion brought by a woman against her neighbour was based on the fact

that she had been known to scrub her doorstep on a Sunday morning after returning from an early Celebration; while the child's definition of her father, as 'the bloke wat 'as dinner wiv us on Sunday,' throws an interesting sidelight on the events which for her served to mark off Sunday from the other days of the week.

Yet clearly a man's religion is of little use if put on and off with a white shirt and stiff collar; it must go with him to the dockyard, the ship, the factory, the office, the shop; if it is real it must affect the spirit of his daily work, and in that sphere it will be judged by his fellows. The dockyard man is quick to perceive and to resent inconsistencies between creed and life, profession and practice.

It is coming more and more to be realised that there can be no divorce of religion from daily life; the Church is at last waking up to the fact that she is responsible for the conditions of a man's labour, that the care of the body is intimately connected with the care of the soul, and her teachers are now emphasising the truth afresh that religion is a matter of right conduct, and not merely of true belief and correct sentiments.

There is, however, another truth which is still in need of more widespread recognition. Religion must influence a man's off time as well as his hours of labour; if Christianity makes a man a better plumber, joiner, shipwright, it must also find a place in the club, on the football field, in all those multitudinous activities by which a man seeks bodily refreshment and relaxation.

It has been said that the best test of a man's character is the way in which he plays games, and

speaking more generally, there is no more certain criterion of the worth of a man's religion than the way in which he takes his pleasures. The spirit of a man's religion must find an outlet not merely in his daily work, but in his daily play. Religion and social life are intimately related, and the one cannot be divorced from the other.

That young men can play a clean game; that half the team which played in the cup-tie on Saturday are to be seen at the Celebration on Sunday morning; that girls can romp without coarseness, going sometimes from club to Confirmation class and from Confirmation class back to club without any sense of incongruity; that women can come together for meeting or outing without gossip or 'tittle-tattle'; that the first concern of every child at the summer treat is to buy something to take back to the mother or sister at home; that the much abused bazaar can serve as the occasion for splendidly unselfish work and the strengthening of the spirit of fellowship throughout an entire district—these things prove beyond question how close is the relation between religion and social life.

The peculiar organisation of the parish, with its mother church at the centre, surrounded by a ring of mission churches, each with its own district of some 1500 houses, possessing its own organisations, and a large degree of self-government and independence, makes a vigorous social life at once the more easily obtainable and the more imperatively necessary. If the sense of parochial unity is to be preserved for social as well as for religious purposes, there must be frequent intercourse between the members of the different churches.

Thus once a year at the annual tea, held during the week of the Dedication Festival at the parish institute, the parish church and each of the missions has its own table or tables filled by its own people, who yet feel that they are part of one great parish, and annually cement the ties which bind them to each other by the time-honoured method of a meal shared in common, reminding them of their common parochial ancestry and inheritance.

Again in the summer the church-workers' garden party, held in the vicarage garden, brings together all workers in whatever capacity and from all parts of the parish. Here may be seen workers of all descriptions and of every age, from the latest addition to the staff of kindergarten teachers, who but a few months before was herself a member of the Sunday-school, to the veteran church official of long service and reminiscent mind who talks to you of 'the old church,' of 'Vicar Jacob' and 'Vicar Lang,' or recalls the half-mythical exploits of a former curate, now perhaps a grave archdeacon, or sun-tanned missionary. Here is gathered into one the driving power of the parish—communicants, Sunday-school teachers, choirmen, members of the different councils, members of the C.E.M.S., each loyal to his own district, yet realising both it and himself as part of the greater whole.

In the summer, too, the parochial fête calls for united action on the part of the whole parish. The arrangements are in the hands of a committee representative of each district, and to the members of the parish church and of each mission is allotted some particular duty for which they are specially responsible. The proceeds of the fête, usually about £120, are given

to the 'parochial enterprise' of the moment, probably the provision of some much-needed mission hall or institute. In this way the assistance of the whole parish is secured for whatever part of it may be most in need of help; and because no progressive parish is likely to be out of debt for long there is always a 'parochial enterprise,' and always the need which calls for united action and strengthens the ties of fellowship between the different parts of the parish.

Once more the great summer outings for boys and girls of the Sunday-school are the concern of the whole parish. Each year on Whit-Monday about 130 boys, drawn from eight different choirs, go for a combined outing to Lee-on-the-Solent; in July the members of the different Bands of Hope, numbering about 400, make in common the annual excursion to the Isle of Wight; while later again some 1300 Sunday-school children are conveyed into the country by two special trains; and last, but not least, there is the infants' treat in the vicarage field and garden—a day of pleasure unalloyed for teachers and children alike.

Thus the people in all parts of the parish—whether young or old—are bound together by the strong ties of a common social life; in the different missions a sense of friendly rivalry never outweighs the conviction of an underlying unity, and all social activities are felt to be but the channel and outlet whereby the spirit of Christ may be made manifest in common life.

But not at all times do we think and act parochially. Each mission district as well as the parish church has its own organisations for purposes whether of business or pleasure. Clubs for men, boys, and girls are established in each district, and although the members of one club

may and often do meet with those of another in league match, or tournament, or social gathering, yet the life of each is separate and complete in itself, and its members are free to make their own arrangements and elect their own officers and committee without regard to the doings of any other club.

The winter treats are the concern of individual missions, though in many cases they are held in the hall of the central institute, so that care has to be taken in the fixing of dates, especially during the month of January when treats are thickest.

Each mission has its own annual tea and entertainment at the parish institute, at which the tables are furnished and presided over by its own members. Tickets are sold at a shilling each, mainly, though not entirely, among those living in the mission district. In this way a considerable sum is contributed annually to the mission finances. At the conclusion of tea a short report is usually given on the work of the last year, and mention made of any events of outstanding importance, whether past or future.

During the summer each mission organisation has its own outing, and besides these smaller ventures there is held in many cases a 'congregational outing,' open to all members of the mission congregation. The numbers who take part vary considerably from year to year; sometimes a mission may be content with a small outing to some place near at hand, at other times there is a demand for an expedition on a larger scale to London, or even as far afield as Oxford. Frequently a system of paying in beforehand is adopted, and by this means many are able to go whose purses could not stand the strain of a lump

sum paid all at once; in one case payments were made for as long a period as nine months.

A feature of all outings and treats of whatever kind is the contribution paid by each member, whether child or adult, as his or her share in the expenses of the day's pleasure. Of some country parishes, at any rate, one still hears the complaint that the cost of all such festivities falls upon the vicar, squire, or some rich benefactor of the parish. Here in Portsea we are fortunately free from so excessive a burden, even the Sunday-school child contributes substantially to the cost of an outing. This system of contributions is at once wise and necessary, since without it treats or excursions of any kind, in a parish where numbers are so great, would be an utter impossibility.

In conclusion a word may be said of bazaars and sales of work. In most cases each mission has annually its own bazaar, or at least the less pretentious sale. A bazaar lasts for three days, and is managed entirely by the members of the mission for whose benefit it is being held. The stalls are provided for the most part by the different mission organisations, such as girls' club, teachers, work party, men's club, etc., though in some cases they are furnished by individuals. Work for a bazaar is begun at least six months beforehand, the first sign of activity being a general meeting open to all members of the mission; after the election of a general committee, there is a further election of sub-committees responsible for the conduct of entertainments, the construction of stalls, the work of advertising, the issue of tickets, etc. In this way the whole mission is drawn together and the spirit of fellowship deepened and strengthened.

A successful bazaar will make a profit of about £150, not in itself a large sum, yet considerable when viewed in relation to the resources of a poor parish. The money obtained is devoted mainly to the mission enterprise of the moment, though in some cases a grant is made to the general fund of the mission. In cases where there is no special enterprise under way the three days' bazaar is replaced by the more modest one-day sale, by which perhaps £50 may be raised for the general fund. Special care is taken that bazaars shall not clash and so lessen one another's chances of success; usually a particular time of year is allotted to each mission for its own undertaking.

XV

THE PAROCHIAL MISSION

By the Rev. C. F. GARBETT

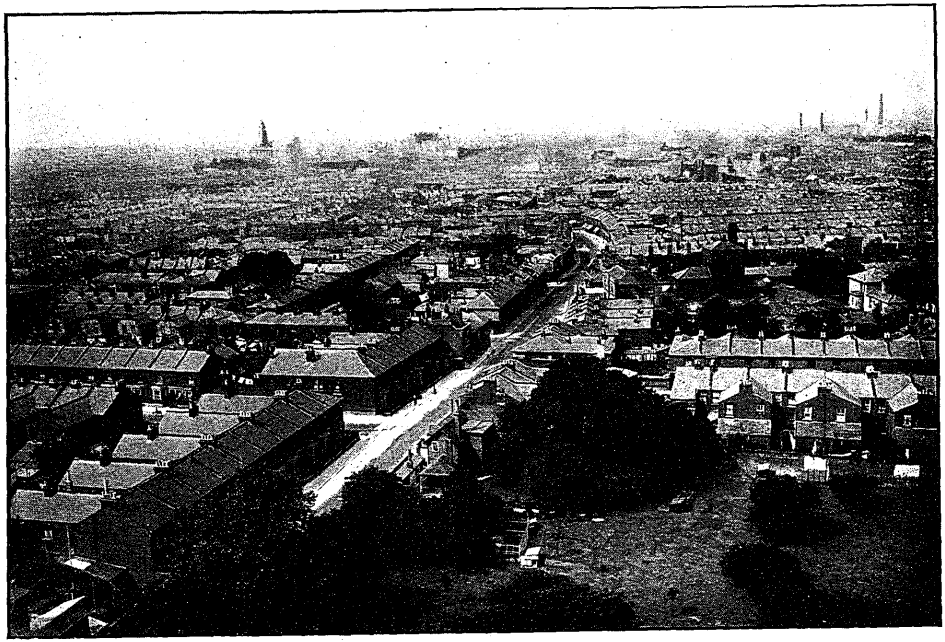

Photo : Russell & Sons, Southsea.

THE PARISH AND TOWN FROM THE CHURCH TOWER

XV

THE PAROCHIAL MISSION

By the Rev. C. F. Garbett

The possibility of holding a mission in the parish had been discussed for many years, but the difficulties had proved too serious. The necessity of completing the parochial buildings, the continued growth of the population, the frequent changes on a large staff had all blocked the way. But when in 1911 the question was again considered, it was clear that the difficulties were no longer so great: the parish had finished growing, the mission churches of the different districts were completed and paid for, and the great majority of the clergy then on the staff signified their readiness to remain in the parish for a period long enough to secure time both for careful preparation for the mission and for following up its results. The clergy and lay workers were at one in believing that the time was ripe for a mission, and after careful and repeated consultation it was decided to hold it in the late autumn of 1913.

The choice of the head missioner was naturally a matter of the first importance. It was necessary to find one who had not only personal spiritual power,

but also the gift of communicating his faith and love to others; who understood and sympathised with the difficulties and problems of a great town parish; whose doctrine and ritual would not irritate and disturb those whom he came to help; who could organise a band of missioners; and last, but by no means least, who possessed a strong enough voice to fill the large parish church. Early in 1912 Canon Bilbrough, the rector of Liverpool, accepted the invitation to conduct the mission. His ministry had been spent in the great industrial towns of the north of England; as an old Wykehamist and a friend of Father Dolling he already knew something of Portsmouth; for many years he had taken missions in different parts of England, most of them under that famous missioner—the late Canon Body.

It was felt that the mission could not be conducted with less than nine missioners, three for the parish church, and one for each of the mission districts. Eventually the following eight consented to assist Canon Bilbrough: the Rev. C. Hepher, the Winchester diocesan missioner; the Rev. E. K. Talbot, a member of the Community of the Resurrection; the Rev. F. S. Horan, vicar of St. Paul's, Prince's Park, Liverpool, and at one time well known in Portsmouth as a naval chaplain; the Rev. H. Hubbard, assistant-curate of Skelton; the Rev. T. H. Hyatt, vicar of St. Mary's, Grassendale; the Rev. E. N. Lovett, rector of St. Mary's, Southampton; the Rev. F. Peacock, vicar of Holy Trinity, Darlington; and the Rev. G. D. White, vicar of St. Luke's, Tranmere. Besides the clergy, Miss Higson in charge of the rescue work at Liverpool, and two other ladies

of experience were secured for special rescue work on the streets.

Long before all the missioners had been obtained, the work of preparation had commenced. In the autumn of 1912 the aims and methods of a mission were explained in sermons throughout the parish, and from that time onwards, publicly and privately, a daily prayer was used for the mission.

The next step was taken in the Lent of 1913, when an appeal was made for workers. In a letter addressed to all communicants a request was made for 400 visitors who would be responsible for definite districts, for men who would visit their own sex in the evening, for volunteers who would sing in the special choirs. The response was most encouraging: without the necessity of personally appealing to individuals nearly 500 sent in their names as ready to assist, and a large number also promised to attend the practices for the mission hymns. From these workers and others a number of committees was formed. At the head was an advisory committee to make the general arrangements; subordinate to it were committees of men, of women, of girls, of lads, and also a small sub-committee responsible for advertising the services on the hoardings and in the local paper. These committees proved most important: they met at rare intervals, but worked extremely hard; they were consulted carefully on all questions connected with the hours and arrangements of the services, and their suggestions were very useful.

At the end of May Canon Bilbrough paid his first official visit to the parish, and addressed a meeting of workers in the institute. The objects of the meeting

were strictly practical, to make clear once again the purpose of the mission, and to instruct the visitors how to set about the work they had undertaken. In the next fortnight smaller meetings were held at the parish church and the mission districts to give the workers an opportunity of conferring with the vicar, and discussing with him any difficulties they still felt. All was now ready for the opening of the preliminary campaign. The parish was divided into over 400 districts of about twenty-five houses, and to every district a visitor was allotted, to whom was given a small book with the names of the occupants of each house. By the middle of June a letter from the vicar announcing the mission was in the hands of all the visitors, and within a week they had delivered it at every house in the parish with the request that it should be carefully read, and that the short mission prayer it contained should be used daily.

Early in October the final period of public preparation commenced. All experts had united in their warning against an over long preparation which would make the workers stale, and the very word 'Mission' an occasion of blasphemy to the man in the street. The preparation which had been long in progress was deliberately more or less quiet, and the clergy by a self-denying ordinance had resisted the temptation to end every sermon with a reference to the mission. But now the time had come to use publicly what had been prepared privately; to summon every worker and churchgoer to public, as well as private, intercession; to concentrate every effort in preparing the atmosphere for the mission, and in stirring up the parish to expectancy and faith. The last weeks of preparation

advanced on two interdependent lines, devotional and visiting.

More and more clearly was it seen that the success of the mission depended on the spirit of prayer in which it was approached. The small prayer issued a year earlier had been supplemented by a larger manual of intercessions, which, with the bishop's permission, was used in the church as well as privately. Special intercessions were offered day by day at the Holy Communion, for the missioners, for the clergy and workers, for churchgoers, for the children in the Sunday-schools, for the members of the Bible classes, for the people of the parish, for the impenitent, for the indifferent and the careless. Quiet days were held both for the clergy and the lay workers. The usual Dedication Festival was used as an opportunity of special prayer, and a great impetus to the enthusiasm of the parishioners was given by the visit of the Archbishop of York, who, on the afternoon and evening of the closing Sunday, preached on the call and opportunity of the mission. The children, too, were given a simple prayer for their daily use. In different houses in the parish, prayer meetings were arranged and conducted by laymen and laywomen. Most striking were the special united services of intercession held every Wednesday in the parish church, when large congregations of over 1000 joined in prayer for God's blessing on the mission, and were inspired and encouraged by the addresses given by Dr. Scott-Holland, the Bishop of Southampton, the Rev. W. Streatfield, Canon B. K. Cunningham, the Bishop of Kensington, and Canon Tupper Carey. At the close of these services the greater part of the congregation

remained for a practice of the mission hymns conducted from the pulpit. From beyond the parish came the news of prayers offered for the mission; from all parts of the kingdom and from over the seas, from distant towns in Canada, Australia, Africa, India, China came messages from clergy and laymen saying that they were remembering the old parish in its great hour of opportunity. Nor were churchmen alone in showing their sympathy, for quite spontaneously in the majority of the Nonconformist chapels in the town prayers were asked for the mission.

It was thus in the strength of prayer that the visitors went forth to their districts to announce the mission, and to invite all to come to its services. Only those who have had any personal experience know how extremely difficult it is to make people realise that a mission has any concern with them whatsoever. After a house had been visited half a dozen times with notices backed up by a personal appeal, often the only impression left is that a young lady called about something to do with the church. Often, when every hoarding blazes with large lettered advertisements of the mission, they are quite unseen by eyes which eagerly gaze on the announcements of the latest thrill at the music hall or picture palace. Often, when the man in the street or the woman at the door has been slowly and patiently brought to understand that a mission is about to be held, the only association aroused is connected with vague ideas of missionaries and cannibals. And often, when all is over and the missioners have left the town, the parish priest will be reproachfully told by some repeatedly visited parishioner that he would have gladly attended the mission if

only he had heard it was being held! To get the people to know that the mission was meant for them and not for some undesirable neighbours was the task laid upon the visitors. They were asked to visit their districts five times in all: once in June and then fortnightly in October and November. As an excuse for calling they were always armed with some literature. In the first week in October they had the letter from the bishop of the diocese; then one from Canon Bilbrough; then a leaflet, 'The Master's Call'; then the complete list of services which was intended to be hung up in every house. The visitors were urged to deliver the letter personally, not to thrust it in the letter-box or under the door; to talk over the services with those whom they saw; and to note down in their books those who should be especially visited during the mission either by themselves or by the clergy. In the last week of preparation the clergy, who had also been steadily working up their districts, visited every house and asked the occupants to place in the window a red cross notice with the date of the mission.

Nor was the prosaic work of advertisement neglected. Three weeks before the mission a solitary notice appeared on the hoardings announcing in large red letters the Portsea mission. In subsequent weeks to this were added full-sized placards with the names of the missioners, the times of the services, the special services for men and women. 'Why, it is mission, mission everywhere,' was the complaint of a passer-by as his eye caught the long row of notices in one of the streets. In the press advertisements were inserted calling attention to the special services; these had the

additional gain of securing good reports of the progress of the mission. One word may here be well said about the expenses of the mission, of which the printing bill was by far the largest item. The total cost was £150. This was raised quite easily by plates at the door at the preparation services, and by large drain pipes placed about the churches during the mission, into which the people cast their coins much in the same way as did the Jews into the trumpet-shape receptacles which Josephus states received the offerings of the faithful in the temple. It was possible to give the Sunday collections to church expenses, and the offerings at the thanksgiving service to the local rescue and preventive work. This is mentioned as the writer knows clergy who have been deterred from a mission by fear of its cost.

On the eve of the mission the parish was in a state of intense expectancy; all through the day people could be found praying in the parish church; long standing quarrels were made up; window after window showed the red cross; everywhere there was a looking forward to a coming of the Spirit of Power.

On the evening of November 22 the missioners arrived. They were met on the border of the parish by a great procession of clergy and 900 laity who, with the singing of hymns and amidst the blaze of many torches, conducted them through enormous and reverent crowds in the narrow Fratton Road to the parish church, where they were received and blessed by the Bishop of the diocese.

During the mission some of the services were held at the parish church alone and were intended for the whole parish. The earliest of the Celebrations on the

weekdays at 5.30 was at the parish church. To this there came the men who had to start early to work. For those who had no time to return to their homes, a coffee stall was provided in the institute. At 11 again the service of intercession was central. To it there came the workers from all the districts, and from all sides of the parish there poured in literally hundreds of intercessions. The women's service in the afternoon was also a combined effort; the advantage of this was evident—instead of a number of small congregations in different churches, over 1000 women came together in the mother church throughout the mission. For those who were unable to leave their children at home a crèche was provided in the institute, and in the room set apart there were sometimes fifty small children to be seen playing, crawling, or crying. But besides these central services each district had its own, its celebrations, its children's services, and, of course, the mission service in the evening. On the Sunday afternoons there were three great central services: for men, for girls, and for lads. Simultaneously the parish church was crowded with 1800 men, the institute with 1100 girls and young women, and one of the smaller halls with 400 lads.

Special preparations had to be made for the children's services. The absence of all church schools made it very doubtful if the children could be induced to attend with anything like regularity the weekday services. To encourage them they were given cards, with a cross in red outline divided into sections for each day. For each section was provided a stamp which illustrated some scene from the Life of our Lord, and one of these was given out at each service.

Thus the child who had not failed in attendance received a cross made of stamps which formed a memorial of the mission. Fear was also felt lest the older children should regard themselves as too learned and sedate to attend the services with those three or four years younger than themselves, but this was overcome by asking the older children to assist as helpers: they were made responsible for getting out the hymn-books, and for keeping order in each row. The result of these preparations was an unexpectedly, almost inconveniently, large attendance of children, some of whom had never been members of any Sunday-school. Very beautiful was the singing of the hymns which had been collected in a special book and carefully practised weeks beforehand.

Open air services were held at noon and in the evening. Twice during the ten days some of the missioners visited the dockyard gates at the luncheon hour, and drew round the trolley from which they were speaking large and attentive crowds. And night after night from the six churches there set forth surpliced processions of choirs and clergy followed by a large number of laity, who went through the streets of the surrounding districts, with a halt now and again for a brief address, given in the majority of cases by one of the laymen.

Of the mission as a whole little need be said. All through the weather was perfect; up to the very day of its opening rain and wind had been continuous, on the closing night the weather changed again for the worse, but not one procession or service was interfered with, and the prayer used so often during the months of preparation, 'That the work of the

mission might not be hindered by bad weather,' was indeed abundantly answered. The congregations grew steadily in devotion and earnestness. Nowhere was there any uncontrolled outburst of emotion, the missioners deliberately appealed to the will and the mind rather than to the emotions. The power of God was felt working. As the days passed many of the intercessions were replaced by thanksgivings for answers received to prayer. Increasingly the missioners were occupied in seeing the many who desired private interviews. Over 1000 resolution cards were signed in the presence of the missioners. The steadily rising tide of devotion reached a climax in a never-to-be-forgotten united Eucharist at 5 A.M. on Thursday, December 4. The morning was cold and dark, but over 1000 communicants assembled to meet and praise the Lord who had been blessing them and their parish so abundantly. The church was decorated with the banners which had been used during the mission. Arrangements had been made for administering the Sacrament at a temporary rail half-way down the church as well as at the high altar, the lady chapel, and under the organ loft. None who were present will ever forget the intense devotion and reverence of the communicants, the silence which followed the prayer of Consecration suddenly broken by the kneeling congregation spontaneously singing, 'And now, O Father, mindful of Thy Love.'

And what have been the results of the mission? This question was once asked of an experienced missioner, whose wise reply was: 'Wait until the Day of Judgment and then I shall be better able to answer

you.' For this is a question to which no rough and ready answer can be given, and the best and most lasting results of a mission are often found in some secret spiritual experience too sacred to disclose. Undoubtedly missions have greatly changed in character in the last fifty years. In the middle of the last century the Church was awaking after a long sleep; in understaffed and poorly organised town parishes were multitudes who had never had the chance of hearing the Gospel message : to them a mission came as an unexpected shock, as a loud cry to repentance, or with a sudden revelation of the love of God; and through the door of opportunity which it threw open crowds of the indifferent and careless poured in, convicted of sin, eager to lead a new life. So in these earlier missions sudden conversions were plentiful and the outward results were instant and startling. But since then conditions have changed for the better, the work of the Church is done more completely, the machinery of the parish has been vastly improved, the standard of clerical visitation is far higher; in a well worked and adequately staffed parish every house is visited at least once a year, and every member of the family is given the chance of joining some Sunday-school, Bible class, club, or society. By the normal methods of parochial visiting the Church gathers in year by year many who once would have only been captured by the great effort of a mission. The more thorough the visiting the fewer will be left to be gleaned at a special time of evangelisation. The influence of a modern mission will, therefore, in a properly worked parish, be mainly on those who are already in touch with Church life. This was certainly

the case with the Portsea mission; its influence made itself felt more among the churchgoers than those utterly indifferent. There were undoubtedly many real conversions: a man sees a procession, follows it into the church, is attracted by what he hears, comes again and yet again, and before the mission is over has made the great decision; an intemperate woman is brought by a friend, suddenly she sees her danger and in fear and penitence turns to Christ; a man standing outside one of the churches hears the singing of a hymn once sung by his mother now long dead, he enters the mission and listens to the preacher, he goes home and tells a dying son what he has heard, day by day he brings back the message to his son, and when the summons of death comes a day or two after the mission the father and son have both learnt the love of Christ. These are three instances out of several known to the clergy, but when all such are taken into account they form only a small proportion of those to whom the mission brought light. Its results are found widespread in other directions: in the winning back of lapsed and infrequent communicants; in the bringing to Confirmation many who had hesitated for long (the 360 candidates at the Confirmation after the mission included many who were thus influenced); above all, in giving a great spiritual uplift to many of the faithful, deepening their penitence, quickening their zeal, filling them with a true love of God. Some of these results are already seen, but others are known only to God. The influence of the mission will continue for many years in the parish, it will make itself felt in many a life dedicated more wholly to the service of God, in prayers

more earnestly said, in greater denial, self-sacrifice, and love on the part of many who perhaps signed no resolution paper, but who nevertheless went from the mission with the light shining in their eyes and with wills braced to action, for they had received a clearer vision of Christ and His Love.

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THE END

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An Appeal

To the Communicants of Portsea Parish for an increased support of Foreign Missions

———:o:———

Why every Communicant should support Missions :

Because we have our orders : ' Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations.' St. Matt. 28, v. 19.

Because God ' Willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.' 1 Tim. 2, v. 4.

Why especially at the present time :

Because never before has the English Church had so great an opening and call for Missionary work.

Christianity must get hold of China in the next few years or never.

Mohammedanism will overrun Africa unless repulsed now.

In Western Canada the Bishop of London tells us we are already almost too late.

India, Burma, and other countries are in extreme need of more help.

Work well begun (e.g. in Burma) is in danger of dropping through lack of funds.

Because there are men and women ready to go, if the Church of England will provide the means for them.

There are at least six young men in our own Parish eager to go out as Missionaries, but lacking the means. Others have had to give up the idea.

If you are doing something already for Foreign Missions, will you increase it ?

If you are doing nothing as yet for Foreign Missions, what will you do ?

There is need not only for money, but for wider knowledge of Missions and interest in them, and above all for earnest and regular prayer for them.

Will you do some of the following?

1. Study. (a) Come to the meetings of the Parish Missionary Association, at which lectures are given by Missionaries from different parts of the world. [2nd Monday in each month. Open to all.]

(b) Take in a Missionary Magazine.

'The Mission Field' (S.P.G.) and 'C.M.S. Gleaner' are monthly, illustrated, 1*d*. 'The East and the West' is quarterly, 1*s*. There are special monthlies issued by Melanesian Mission, U.M.C.A., O.M.C., etc.; and ½*d*. monthlies for children. Any of these will be delivered at your house by the Missionary Association.

2. Pray. (a) Pray regularly, especially for those who have gone out from this Parish, and for the Missions in which they work.

'Quarterly Intercession Paper' (1*d*. Yearly) is a guide and help in prayer.

(b) Join the Missionary Association, promising to pray daily and at Holy Communion for Missions.

3*d*. entrance fee the only payment. Members receive notice of all monthly meetings.

3. Give. (a) Give a Subscription or Donation. The Association will forward it to any Mission that you wish.

The S.P.G. General Fund is in special need of support at present.
The Winchester Diocese is trying to raise £1000 extra per annum for this.

(b) Take a Missionary Box, for S.P.G. or any special Mission, and put something in each week. A ½*d*. or 1*d*. weekly is of great value.

Many can do several of these; all can do at least one.

The Portsea Parish Missionary Association, which addresses this appeal to you, exists to organise and unite the Missionary efforts of our congregations. Daily prayer for Missions is the condition of Membership. It has Representatives at each Church in the Parish, who will give all information.

Please think and pray over this appeal, and then fill in on the annexed form what you are willing to do.

THIS FORM WILL BE CALLED FOR IN TWO OR THREE DAYS

Please mark with a **X** those parts which you are willing to adopt, and strike out words which do not apply to you. (Anything which you *already* do should not be put down.)

Put X here.

I will attend the monthly meetings when possible, and would like to receive notice cards of them.

I will take in a Missionary Magazine.

Underline the one desired

Mission Field—1*d.* monthly. Southern Cross Log (Melan. Miss.)—1½*d.* monthly.

C.M.S. Gleaner—1*d.* monthly. The East and the West.—1*s.* Quarterly.

Central Africa (U.M.C.A.)—1*d.* monthly.

Any other special Magazine.....

I will pray regularly for Missions.

I will take in the Quarterly Intercession Paper. 1*d. Yearly.*

I will pray daily and at Holy Communion for Missions, and will join the Missionary Association.

I will give a { *subscription* / *donation* } *of £ : s. d. for* .....

I will take a Missionary box for :—(Underline for what Mission.)

S.P.G. C.M.S. Melanesian Mission. U.M.C.A.

Any other special Mission.....

Name (Mr., Mrs., or Miss) .....

Address .....

Part of Parish with which specially connected.....

(This form may also be sent if desired to the Hon. Sec. at the Vicarage.)

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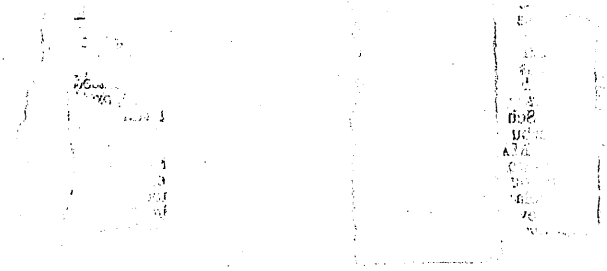

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